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BRIEF NOTICE
OF THE
LIFE OF
MRS. HANNAH KINNEY,
FOR TWENTY YEARS.

BY WARD WITHAM,
^{Esq.}
HER FIRST HUSBAND.

"Strange whimsies on her fancy struck,
And gave her brain a dismal shock ;
Her mem'ry fails, her judgment ends,
She quite forgot her nearest friends ;
Swore all the world should bow and skip,
To her almighty goodyship."—[M'FINGAL.]

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR,
1842.

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of subscribers.

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WARD WITHAM,  
In the Clerk's Office of the District of Maine.  
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PREFACE.

The cause of my putting forth this little book is sufficient, I think, to justify me in so doing. I was the first husband of the person whose history it details ; and I have heretofore shrunk from doing aught to prejudice the public against her, either by word or deed. Regard for the feelings of my children, (of whom she is the mother,) respect for myself, and pity for her wayward propensities, have restrained me from exposing her frailty. But when, without the existence of the least necessity, by a pretended exposure of my misconduct, she has done all that can be done to bring odium upon those children and upon me, I believe it is high time that the public should know to whom we are actually indebted for our real disgrace ; and that I should protect that which is worth to me more than my purse, —my character.

I do not know that I can blame Mrs. Kinney for wishing to stand fair before the public ; but if she would so stand, she must

be careful not to attempt to stand upon the ruin of others. I am not the only one, I perceive by her book, who has incurred her displeasure. Whether the individuals upon whom she has there been so lavish of her censure, think her remarks in regard to them worth noticing, I know not, as I have never had a word of conversation with them upon the subject. When it is thoroughly known however, what is the real character of the person who has arraigned them at the bar of public opinion, they will be content to let her accusations pass for what they are worth.

My children are very, very dear to me. No one who knows me can accuse me of a want of paternal affection. They are good children; so far as I am aware, their conduct and characters are unimpeachable;—and did I believe that that which appears in this book could add to their unhappiness, or to the unpleasantness of their situation, I would not publish it. There are those in the community—a large and respectable class—whose regard I wish my children to possess, who have already a correct opinion of the character of Mrs. K.; therefore they cannot suffer more than they have in their estimation. And there are those who care

not what kind of a character a person possesses,—one course of conduct, in their eyes, entitling an individual to as good a character as another,—and the regard of such persons I would not have my children exert themselves in the least to obtain. They, probably, have, ere this, learned that they can never have a good reputation by depending upon their mother; and a correct life, with strict moral principles as its basis, is the only thing on which they can depend for prosperity and the good opinion of the world. The sympathy of the people is in their favor, and will increase if they are deserving of it.

It is, indeed, trying to my feelings, when I consider their situation. The tear unbidden will start when my mind reverts to them, and this is not seldom. But, although Fortune has, in their earlier days, been to them a hard mistress, she will eventually grow lenient and become as indulgent as she has been severe. Let them not despair.

To the reader I have a word to say. There is a moral contained in the history of Mrs. Kinney which is well worth studying. The young man full of ardor and of ‘love,’ who sees nothing but the most adorable qualities in the fair object of his affection,

is taught to control his passions sufficiently to allow his reason to ascertain whether his next step,—if it be that which will bind him indissolubly to her—will not be his ruin.

The man of more mature years will see that, unless he exercises the utmost circumspection, he may be deceived by a woman; particularly if his regard for her, in the first place, and his pursuits, in the next, be such as to prevent his making an exertion to learn whether she possesses any of the short comings of her sex.

It may be that Mrs. Kinney and her friends, hereafter, will think fit to publish much concerning me, in the forms of communications, letters, affidavits, certificates, etc., as I have been threatened with something of the kind; but I have a conscience void of offense. There is no act of mine, committed since I have arrived at years of discretion, of which I have now any recollection, that I think the public would consider an inexcusable deviation from right; therefore I have no fear of the effect of any representation which may be put forth to injure my character, or the veracity of this book.

LIFE OF MRS. KINNEY.

CHAPTER I.

HANNAH HANSON.

Hannah Hanson was about 17 years of age when I became acquainted with her.— She was possessed of a good figure, a fair countenance with a large expressive eye, and agreeable manners. I was at this time hardly twenty-one years old, and it is not surprising that I should have been attracted by her appearance. I had but seen her, when an interest was awakened in my bosom which, after a short acquaintance, increased to affection. It was, perhaps, the rash act of a boy to offer her my hand and heart, while yet a minor, but I could not resist the inclination, and the offer was accepted.

A

I was proud of what I thought my good fortune when I led this fair young girl to the altar. With a good character and a gentle disposition, as I supposed, she bid fair to make me a happy husband. But alas! how often do we find the tempting fruit, with rich exterior, a mere mass of corruption!—I little thought how full my cup of misery was to be filled in consequence of this act: The few blissful hours then spent by me, have been obscured, I had almost said, obliterated, from my memory, by the days, months, years of wo, that succeeded them.

But it is useless for me now to mourn over these things. Unhappiness, such as I have suffered, I trust is no longer before me, as I am forever separated from its cause. The recollection of scenes through which I have passed, when examined with the care which is necessary to place them before the public in their true character, will open wounds to bleed afresh, which I had hoped were fully healed. But duty to myself, to my family, and to the public, requires a cor-

rect statement of facts, and they shall be given, let the consequences to my feelings be what they may.

CHAPTER II.

Her Marriage---First Subsequent Misconduct--- Something Mysterious.

Our marriage took place in January, 1822, in New Portland, Maine. Shortly after, we went to housekeeping, about one mile from Mrs. Witham's father's. In the house where we lived, resided a family by the name of Weymouth. Every thing passed pleasantly for some three months, when I met with the first trouble, occasioned by the misconduct of my wife. (B.) Mr. and Mrs. Weymouth, at one time, missed some articles, trifling indeed, but articles of necessity and such as they felt disposed to look after. They had not proceeded far in their examination, before they were satisfied that

the goods had been purloined by Mrs. Witham! When this came to my knowledge I was thunderstruck. And any man of spirit, who has had a young bride can well understand what my grief must have been on being told that my wife was a thief! I was, at first, inclined to resist the accusation as an insult, but the positive manner of the accusers induced me to withhold my anger until I had made every endeavor to ascertain the truth from her. She was more positive in her denial, if possible, than they were in their charge. I then told her that if I should be satisfied of the fact, I would leave her forever. After this, her mother talked with her upon the subject, supposing there must have been some ground for the accusation, and urged her, if she were guilty, to confess it, have the affair concluded and forgotten. But she had denied it too long and too loudly, now to acknowledge it, and she took the Bible in her hand and called God to witness that she was innocent! Mr. and Mrs. Weymouth, seeing my dis-

tress, from motives of pity, I suppose, said but little more about it. I thought there must be some mistake in the matter, and allowed myself to believe in her entire innocence.

I, perhaps, should not have pressed the matter so hard upon her, had not Mr. and Mrs. Weymouth told me that she had confessed it to them, urging them, at the same time, never to reveal it to me, lest I should leave her.

But few knew of the affair, and these were not inclined to circulate reports concerning it, from some cause. The matter subsided, and I began again to feel somewhat calm, and afterwards happy, when it was made known to me that there was a probability of having an increase of family in proper time.

My happiness continued, and I dreamed not of further trouble until the seventeenth of June, about five months after my marriage. In the night Mrs. Witham was taken ill; I went for her mother, who reached the

house a few minutes before Mrs. W. was delivered of a child ! The child, however, was not long in the world. Ignorant as I was respecting such matters, I was convinced that there was something mysterious connected with this premature birth ; particularly as I had been told that a report was in circulation that Mrs. Witham had been guilty of improper conduct, previous to her marriage, with a young man at a Mrs. C's. I had called on Mrs. C. to learn the facts, but was informed by her that she was ignorant of any such conduct at her house on the part of Hannah. But I was satisfied that something improper had taken place, for I could not be the father of that child. I was afterwards informed by friends that Mrs. C. had said that, as things were, she regretted she had not told me the truth about the affair ; that some time previous to my marriage, Hannah was at her house at a party, and from some circumstances that came to her (Mrs. C's) knowledge respecting the conduct of the young man with Hannah, she

thought she would recollect, or make a minute of the time, and she should be satisfied if she had a child about the middle of June, who was its father.

When this fact was made known to me, my mortification can hardly be described.—I had been warmly attached to Hannah, but the evidence I supposed I had of her want of principle, and of regard for her character, and of the disgrace I was suffering in consequence of her misconduct, determined me to abandon her. I informed her and the neighbors of my determination, and began to make preparations for carrying it into effect. But my intention was frustrated by Mrs. Witham's mother, than whom no person ever had more influence with me. By smooth words, and strong appeals to my feelings, she persuaded me into the belief that I was mistaken ; that the reports against Hannah were the work of her enemies ; it was impossible that she could be guilty of such things ; and I had better be sure that the reports were true before I took the

course I proposed, and quit a young, and probably innocent wife forever. By such appeals she fairly bewildered me ; I tried to believe Mrs. Witham to be an injured woman, and concluded to change my determination and remain with and protect her.

CHAPTER III.

Prosperity. Family Matters. Vexatious Affair with a Schoolmaster. A shade of happiness.

I determined, after Mrs. Hanson had persuaded me into the belief that Mrs. Witham was really an injured woman, to credit no more reports about her which were not supported by the most direct proof, and to endeavor to live on good terms with her.

In the October succeeding our marriage, I thought it would be better for us to live by ourselves. As I had a house roughly finished, we concluded to make it our residence. This proved, for a time, to be a fortunate

move for me. Mrs. Witham was industrious, and actually appeared to exert herself to make my home a happy one, homely as it was. I now began again to enjoy myself. My mind was relieved of the stories which had borne like an incubus upon it, and I imagined I saw in my wife a great many good qualities. In fact, I now think that, had she been governed by principle, and continued in the course of conduct she now pursued for a while, no better wife than she could have been found in all Maine.

My business was upon my farm in the summer; in the winter I was engaged in lumbering in the woods. I was prosperous, and we neither of us could complain that we were not as much favored as any other persons in our condition in life.

In July, 1823, Mrs. Witham made me the happy father of a daughter. This was a boon of more satisfaction to me than would have been a mint of money. It bound me closer to its mother, and I felt that, by it, all the mental suffering I had experienced

since my marriage was fully requited ; and I resolved I would never again allow the thought of separating from her to cross my mind if she continued to give as good evidence of a determination to do well as she had since we had lived by ourselves.

It would have been a source of gratification to me could I have made more rapid advances in the acquisition of property than I did ; but, as it was, I could find no fault. Our daughter grew apace, and with its childish prattle rendered home to me, if it did not to its mother, almost an heaven upon earth. But alas ! the devil is too jealous of the happiness of man, always to allow woman to escape his snares. Mrs. Witham might have lived and died loving and beloved, in our little paradise, instead of being an outcast ; and multiplying her own sorrow and the sorrow of all those early friends who would have thought it a pleasure to minister to her happiness in this world, but her inclinations were too powerful to be controled by any moral considerations, and from this period she gave herself up to them.

That she might not be destitute of assistance and company during my absence in the winter, I employed a boy to live in my family. With his assistance she was at first content, as a woman who had at heart the interest of her husband while he was striving to advance his fortune in a small way, should have been, and I was pleased with the apparent interest she took in all my plans for some time. But in the winter of 1824 and 5, I was doomed again to suffer from her indiscretion, or rather perverse determination to bring disgrace upon me. She could not be content with the company of the boy alone, with whom during my absence she had been satisfied, but concluded, without consulting me, that it would be profitable as well as pleasant to have a boarder, if one could be found. She was not long in obtaining one. The District Schoolmaster was the object of her desires, and she succeeded in inducing him to board with her. But, from some cause, he remained there but a few days, and Mrs. Witham lost his company and her character together.

When I returned, my ears were filled with reports respecting her and the schoolmaster. That she had been guilty of various improper acts in her intercourse with him, that he like Joseph, was obliged to flee from her.— These reports affected me, but, as I had before suffered from worse reports which she had persuaded me were false, and as I knew the schoolmaster to be a man of worth and character, I concluded that the safest and easiest course for me was to pay no attention to them.

It is true I was told that he went to the house of Wm. Titcomb, Esq., (a neighbor,) and informed him of certain singular facts respecting her. I concluded it would afford me no satisfaction to make any further inquiries about them, and I allowed the story to pass unheeded.

In the summer of 1825, Mrs. Witham became the mother of a boy. This addition to my family served more and more to attach me to it. I doated on my children, and, if, a thought now crossed my mind of separa-

ting myself from them, it was banished immediately. And what father is there, deserving the name, who can look upon his offspring, in their infant innocence, and allow even a suspicion to enter his thoughts that the misconduct of their mother may ever be the means of driving him from them?

When, in the autumn of the year in which my second child was born, I looked upon the bountiful harvest with which a good Providence had seen fit to favor me—upon the improvements which had been made upon my buildings—upon my small, but beautiful stock of cattle,—and reflected upon the fair prospect before me, in a worldly point of view, and then cast my thoughts upon my little family, I experienced a feeling of satisfaction which thousands upon thousands then rolling in wealth, well might have envied. Could my wife have experienced the same sincere satisfaction, and have always heeded the promptings of reason, this little farm might now have been a large estate, and she might have been thinking

with much complaisance upon her happy lot in being its mistress and the mother of an affectionate and respectable family of children.

CHAPTER IV.

Another Difficulty. Mrs. Witham's Management. A Justice Trial. Unhappiness. Disgrace. Removal to Dover.

There are people who are continually involving themselves and their friends in trouble, which they might easily avoid, if they were governed by principle. Following the impulse of passion, without for an instant casting a thought towards the consequences, ere they are aware, they find themselves in a situation from which they cannot easily recover. I sometimes thought that Mrs. Witham might be a person of this description, and was disposed to look upon her occasional deviations from duty, as the result

of a natural infirmity beyond her control,— But I am now about to relate occurrences which will place her character in a different aspect, and which involved me in misery.

In the winter of 1825—6, I was absent from home about four months lumbering, on Dead River. This winter, although I was far from home, I could not but feel much pleasure when reflecting upon the little family I had left there, and the severity of my toil was much lessened. But I little knew the scenes that were there being enacted: that the wife of my bosom was disgracing herself, and rendering me and my children objects of compassion to my neighbors, by her unnatural conduct.

When I left home I employed a lad some fifteen or sixteen years of age, by the name of Hiram Wetheren, to stay at my house during my absence, giving him the privilege of attending school. I had not been long absent when Mrs. W. became dissatisfied with him. It seems that he was not large enough to serve her purposes. Although

the labor to be done was so light that a much smaller boy could have easily performed it, she was decided that Hiram was not suitable for her service, and she forthwith discharged him. But she had another person in view, who, she was satisfied would perform the necessary duties in accordance with her ideas of correctness. He was a young man by the name of G——, and undoubtedly was well disposed. I do not know but when he went there, his habits were in every respect correct. But he had not been long in her service before suspicions began to be rife in the neighborhood that all was not as it should be in my house. And here, I cannot forbear remarking that, in many country towns, people are inclined to keep watch and take good care of their neighbors' affairs. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult for the head of a family to correct his children, or perform some other necessary domestic duty, without being watched by some half a dozen of *friends*, and either advised by them as to the course he should

pursue, or censured for the course he has pursued. It was my good fortune to be favored with several of this class of agreeable neighbors, and my affairs were well attended to while I was at home, and particularly while I was absent.

At this time, these (my neighbors) had so great a regard for my welfare that they determined to be satisfied whether their suspicions were correct in regard to the conduct of Mrs. W. with the young man ; and they kept watch about my house night after night, that they might have some evidence that these terrible surmises were or were not true. Whether, by this course, they did obtain such evidence, I have never been informed, but it had the effect to alarm Mrs. Witham, and, in her solicitude to keep the secret, she came very near revealing it.

On one occasion she was visiting at her father's with the two children, and casually observed to her mother before a neighbor who was present, that, the night before, the little girl *thought her father had got home*

when she awoke in the night. Mrs. Witham's mother looked knowingly at Hannah, and winking at her, intending to warn her not to expose her frailty, asked her what she meant. She took the hint, and added that she had put the little girl into bed with G—— the night before, which was probably the reason of her thinking so. This was thought to be a good turn at the time, but it confirmed the neighbors in the belief, that her intercourse with the young man was not such as it should have been.

At length she became so fearful that the reports would reach my ears, that she went before her father, who was then a sort of magistrate, and complained that G—— had so far forgotten his duty to her husband, and his respect for her reputation, as to allow himself to get into bed with her, (C) and wished him to take some measures to punish him for this gross disregard of female honor. He listened to the complaint and proceeded to execute summary punishment upon the delinquent. I shall not attempt to

describe the whole course of the proceedings in this remarkable case, lest I should deviate from the facts; suffice it to say, however, that G—— plead guilty to the charge, and threw himself upon the mercy of the Court; this appeased his anger somewhat, and in consideration of the circumstances he imposed a fine of only five dollars, upon the payment of which he discharged the delinquent. With this, as the Court was satisfied, Mrs W. was satisfied—a heavy burthen being removed from her shoulders, and G—— afterwards acknowledged that he was satisfied, for if the Court took into consideration the number of times he had been guilty of the same thing he must have allowed one eightieth part of the fine to be a sufficient compensation for each time!

But this was not all the disgraceful conduct of which she was guilty during my absence. She gave herself up, it would seem, to such other temptations as the arch enemy was pleased to place before her. Not content with having disgraced her family and

having brought upon herself the contempt of her neighbors, she still further degraded herself by stealing from a house in the vicinity, the owner of which was absent for a few weeks, several articles of value. When the owner returned he missed the articles, and in making search for them was informed that Mrs. W. knew something relative to them, and, at length, obliged her to confess her guilt. But she did not confess without imploring him to conceal the whole matter from me. She feared that I should at this time carry my threats of leaving her into execution, if it came to my knowledge.

The question may here arise in the mind of the reader, why a woman so regardless of her husband's feelings, or her own character should care if he did leave her? It is an apt question, I admit, but its answer I think is not difficult. She, in fact, cared nothing for me; she knew that it would be almost impossible to get a living in that part of the country, if I would not support her; so rather than starve, she preferred to live with me.

On my return in the spring, there was no time lost by my neighbors in giving me information of the behavior of my wife. My first impulse was to leave her forthwith, without even asking of her an explanation of her conduct ; but when I thought of my children, I hardly knew where or what I was ; my mind became so distracted that for some-time I was incapable of coming to any decision as to what course I should pursue.— To leave the woman who was every moment a curse to me, would have been a pleasure ; but the idea of leaving with her those sweet children, guilty of no crime, but liable to be educated in all their sinful mother's depravity, was worse than that of death itself.— What could I do ? I consulted some of my friends, but they could not advise me as to any thing definite. They saw my perplexity, and what they should do under the same circumstances they could not tell.

At length, after my mind had become more calm, I concluded to investigate the whole affair, and I first applied to *her* for an

explanation of the reports, but she denied again and again that there was any truth in them. She said, however, that G—— did get into bed with her, but, that she was in any way to blame in the matter, she positively denied. And in relation to the stolen goods, she affirmed that the whole was an absolute falsehood ; and this she did with the Bible in her hand, as she did on a former occasion, recollecting the effect which such a solemn act then had upon me.

There was no way in which she could deny those reports, which she thought would produce conviction in my mind to which she did not resort. But it was of no avail ; the evidence which I obtained from other sources was so overwhelming that aught she could say served rather to aggravate than to diminish her guilt.

Rozilla Moody, a girl fourteen or fifteen years of age, lived in my house a short time that winter. She was small, in size, and Mrs. W. probably thought her incapable of understanding all that took place in her

presence ; therefore she was not so guarded as she otherwise would have been. The consequence was, that every transaction of an unusual nature was borne on the wings of the wind in all directions. And it was by Rozilla's reports that the suspicions against her were strongly confirmed.

On examining this girl, she was so clear in describing transactions, and adhered to her statements with such determination, that I was forced to give them full credence, particularly as they were corroborated by circumstances.

Upon a full investigation, I was established in the belief that all the reports concerning the last winter's proceedings in my family were less than the truth, and I resolved that, in some way or other, I would be separated from that woman. On learning this, both her father and mother visited me, and exerted themselves to bring about a reconciliation. But I told them that to attempt any thing farther was useless, for hardly any earthly consideration would induce me long-

er to risk my happiness with one whose every desire seemed to be to devise ways by which she could increase my misery.

The only obstacle to an immediate departure, as I before remarked, was my children. For them I felt bound to make suitable provision ;—for with their worthless mother, I would not have them remain.— That I should not succeed in finding some one that had sufficient pity for their condition, who would take them and properly bring them up, did not occur to me. Imagine, then, my surprise, on inquiry, at finding no one, of all my good friends that had interested themselves so much in my welfare, who had not some serious objection to taking them. One dreaded difficulty with their mother ; another feared that something might happen to me by which he should be deprived of his pay ; and another thought they would be too much trouble ! Thus was I baffled at every turn, and sometimes it occurred to me, that my wife and every other person I had before considered my

friend, were linked together to crush me.—But on reflection, I knew that it was human nature to sympathise with distress when it was attended with no sacrifice, and to keep aloof when substantial assistance was required to relieve it.

The Hanson family saw my difficulty, and thought they would make one more attempt to reconcile me to my wife, that I might not leave her; and they exerted themselves to do away the impression, then existing in the community, that she had been unfaithful to me.

Their first movement was to get Rozilla to deny her statements concerning the last winter's iniquity; and they sent for her to go into their family as help. Ignorant of their real intentions, she went. When she arrived, Mrs. Hanson, Mrs. Witham, and several other members of the family, were prepared to force the girl to deny all she had said relative to Mrs. W. But notwithstanding a close cross questioning, threatenings, and various improper means adopted by

some of them, like a firm and virtuous girl, she persisted in the assertion that they were true. She was much frightened by the course adopted towards her by these persons; but she was so positive in her statements that they concluded to send her back as she came.

When Mr. Moody (Rozilla's father) heard of these proceedings he was so enraged with Mr. Hanson, that he reprimanded him severely; upon which, Mr. Hanson told him he must acknowledge that he believed Rozillas' statements to be true.

I have in my possession, affidavits of both Rozilla and her father, from which I will now give one or two extracts relating to certain matters mentioned above. I will take from Rozilla's first.

"In the winter of 1825—6, I went to Mrs. Hannah Witham's (now Mrs. Kinney) to assist her in the house. Her family then consisted of herself, two children, S—G—, and myself; Mr. Witham being then in the woods, lumbering. I stayed

with Mrs. Witham about a week. I was about fifteen years of age. One evening, as we sat before the fire, Mr. G—— was reading till about 9 o'clock, when he went out of doors. Mrs. Witham said to me, it is a good opportunity for you to go to bed.—The bed in which Mrs. Witham, myself, and the children slept, was in this same room. I accordingly went to bed, not suspecting any thing wrong, and soon went to sleep.—In the course of the night I awoke, and found no person in the room with myself but the children. I could see all over the room, as there was a good fire light. Young as I then was, I thought this strange, for I could not imagine where Mrs. Witham was, unless she was in the bedroom with Mr. G——. There were then, I am confident, but two beds in the house.

“While I was at Mrs. W’s, in searching for some sand, by her directions, to use in scouring, I discovered a cheese secreted behind the chimney, with a small piece cut out. This was after William Witham’s

house had been broken open, and a cheese and other things taken therefrom.

"In the summer following, I was sent for to go to Esquire Hanson's. I went, and was questioned by him about the G—— affair, and told him the same in substance as I have above stated, and he said no more about it."

The following is from the affidavit of Mr. Robert Moody :—

"In a conversation with Nathan Hanson, I complained to him for getting Rozilla, my daughter, (now Mrs. Miles,) to his house, to try to injure her in the estimation of others, and he said he did not intend to do any such thing ; but he believed all she had said about the G—— affair was true."

The Hanson family treated me very kindly, but said no more to me about Hannah, or about my leaving her. I have no doubt but they would have felt it a mercy to them could she have been removed to another world, they had suffered such disgrace, and trouble, in every respect, from her misconduct.

Until I had discovered that no provision could be made for my children, which was more than a month after I left the woods, I had had no connection with my wife, and never should have had again, were it not for my disappointment in this matter.

My children were to be taken care of, and as I was determined not to leave them unprovided for, I involuntarily, as it were, was obliged to remain. But I resolved that New Portland should no longer be my place of abode, and I began to cast about me for some place to which I could remove, and live without being harrassed by the reflection that my family was a subject of constant conversation.

In the summer of 1826, I made a tour Eastward, with the intention of finding some place where I might establish myself in the tanning business,—that being an occupation by which, it was impressed upon my mind, I might better my fortune. In the course of my journey, I heard that there was a tan yard in Dover, then in Penobscot County,

(now in Piscataquis,) which might be obtained on reasonable terms. Here, I directed my steps, and being pleased with the place, I made the purchase. My family and goods I removed thither in the winter of 1826—7.

CHAPTER V.

First Residence in Dover. Mrs. W. gives some evidence of reformation. Relapses. Old Reports revived. She quarrels with the neighbors. Trouble in consequence. Mr. W. leaves her.

It sometimes happens that a change of situation and of circumstances, produces a change in the habits of an individual, when every thing else fails ; and I thought it possible that Mrs. Witham might now have some ambition to elevate herself from the degradation to which she had fallen.— She had every inducement to do so.— She was far from the reports of her former

frailty. No blemish was attached to her character among her new acquaintances.— Some of the most respectable people of the town exhibited a disposition to be upon good terms with her ; and every one seemed to be pleased with her appearance. At first her conduct was such that I could find no fault with her, and, although I had been made so miserable by her, I at length really began to hope that her reform would be permanent. Her professions were always fair, and when they were confirmed by her practice, how could I but hope ? My former affection for her, in a measure, returned, and I felt that there was happiness yet in store for me.

For sometime she appeared to seclude herself from company, and to enjoy herself in her family ; but the novelty of her situation, by and by, began to wear off, and she sought out the gossipping neighbors. She is not of that class of women whose ears are always shut and whose tongues are always still. Her long silence, was nothing more

than the precursor of an eruption which revealed the vile elements which had been gathering in her bosom. She has well said in her book "that no difficulty took place with us *on account of any ill success.*"— This is as true as any thing she has written. The difficulty was occasioned by the course of conduct she marked out for herself, and pursued with so much zeal.

Her first act was to reveal the reports which had existed concerning her in New Portland, by accusing people there of endeavoring to ruin her by malicious slanders. In the beginning, not much heed was paid to her accusations, except by the expression of a little sympathy for her when she made them ; but, eventually, she became so earnest in her allegations, and they were of so singular a character, that people began to make inquiries relative to them. When this came to be the case, her former character was quickly made known, and my family were reduced to the dishonorable station they had possessed in New Portland.

Previous to our leaving New Portland, Mrs. Witham, in view of her past transgressions, exhibited some marks of repentance ; professed to have met with a change of heart ; put on a good show of humility ; related her experience, and offered herself for admission to the Free Will Baptist Church. But the Pastor of this Church was too good a man, and had too long been acquainted with the wiles of the devil, too suddenly to overlook all her misdeeds, and she was rejected. (D.) This disappointment, however, did not give her much offense.—It is true there was now and then a relapse, but in the main, she kept up the appearance of piety pretty well, until she found herself avoided in Dover. Then the mask was removed, and Vice, that

“Monster of so hateful mein,
As to be hated, needs but to be seen,”
came again to full view.

When I found that the old reports were current in Dover, I became quite disheartened. I would have endeavored to put a stop to them, but I knew that all my exer-

tions would be of no avail ; and I made up my mind to live in the disgrace for which I supposed I was destined. I continued to live in this way for nearly two years, tormented continually by the gadding of my wife. Many things I witnessed in her conduct which I repeatedly told her had a bad appearance ; and I finally threatened to desert her if she did not abandon them. But this was too old a story now to have any effect, and she kept on as before.

One evening, on my return from work, I was met by her with a complaint that she had recently heard that things were reported about her which were not true. That some of her neighbors had spread them to injure her, and that she was determined to put an end to them ; and she urged me to enlist in a warfare with her against them.— To this I objected, for I knew that whether the stories were true or false, there were enough which were true, and I had no desire to engage in a contest where I had every thing to lose and nothing to gain ; and I

told her that, in future, she must fight her own battles, without the expectation of any assistance from me. Upon this, she retorted, and I replied by bringing up many of the old occurrences which had taken place, through her, in my family, to my injury, and her whole life and character were freely canvassed. The battle waxed warm between us, and lasted nearly all night.

She could not reply to instances of her misconduct which were brought forward, and she threatened to make way with herself, for she would not live another week!—I expressed my approbation of her determination, and a hope that if that were the case, I might once more enjoy happiness. But this was an angry threat; though if it had been carried into execution, as it has proved, I should not have been the only one benefitted.

Mrs. Kinney has alluded, in her book, to assistance I received from her father. At this time he had two hundred dollars of my money in his hands, which he had received

on account of my farm in New Portland.— He sold it for three hundred dollars, a third of which he had paid me in leather, at Mr. Joseph Southwick's, in Vassalborough, Me. The balance in his hands, I was much in need of, and I knew of no way to obtain it but by a lawsuit; and it would have taken me a year to get it in this way.

After the quarrel with Mrs. Witham, on that memorable night, I determined that, let the consequences be what they might, I would not longer remain with her. I would not tarry for the money in the hands of Hanson, but with what I could get, aside from the leather and tools which I left with my family, I resolved to quit the country forever; thoroughly convinced that nothing but misery was in store for me if I remained.

Seeing my determination, Mrs. Witham now urged and begged me to remain. With tears in her eyes, she pleaded for herself, and for the children; and renewed her promises of future good behavior. But I had seen

too many of her crocodile tears, and heard too many of her hypocritical lamentations, to be swerved that time, from the course I had concluded to take.

Having made every preparation for departure, not forgetting to leave a sufficient supply for the family for six months, at least, if used with proper economy, the time arrived when I was to part from them. When I bade my wife farewell for the last time as I thought, I must confess a pang shot through my heart, for she was my wife, and I once loved her; but when I bade my little ones adieu, I thought my heart would break, indeed. The bitterness of this moment I shall not attempt to describe. The bare recollection of it, at this late day, fills my eyes with tears. I left the friendless things with streaming eyes, but with a resolution that they should be provided for in a manner more for their benefit than they ever could be in their present situation.

After I left Dover, I eventually found my way to Boston. Here I got into business,

and was tolerably successful. But I could not keep my mind from reverting to my family.* Absence served, in a degree, to reconcile me to my wife, and I actually thought of sending for her and the children ; and I might, in that city, be able to prevent the history of her former course from being known. While I was revolving this in my mind, I received a letter from a friend, which confirmed me in my resolution to have nothing to do with her. The letter was dated June 1830, and was, in substance, as follows :—

“Mr. W. Witham—

Dear Sir—Thinking it a duty I owe to you, I cannot refrain from informing you of some of the reports that are in circulation about your wife. It is reported that she has had improper conduct with two men. One of them is H—— of this village ; and it is known that letters have passed between them.”

*While in Boston, I sent Mrs. Witham for the family in Dover, two twenty and one ten dollar bills of the U. S. Bank —a barrel of flour and several other valuable articles ; I provided for the family as well as I was able.

CHAPTER VI.

Mrs. Witham's conduct in Dover. A singular affair, and more singular Letters from her Father. Her visit to New Portland, and occurrences there. Her return to Dover; and her further conduct while in that place.

In order to keep up the connection in her history, I shall now state such facts as have come to my knowledge relative to Mrs. Witham's conduct, after I left her in Dover. These facts are corroborated by testimony which cannot be refuted, or I should have here left her until a later period of her life.

In May, 1839, Mrs. Witham's father wrote to a gentleman in the vicinity of Dover, requesting that he would inform him if S— G— had been in that neighbourhood within a few months then past, and what his business was, and where he put up. He thought he could obtain the information of Mrs. Witham. He had certain reasons for making the inquiry which he did not then wish to disclose. This S— G— was the person with whom she had had the

law business in New Portland before her father, and the reader can well understand the reason why Mr. Hanson was so particular and so secret in his inquiries.

He also wished to know of this gentleman the reported reason of my leaving my family. What the reply of the gentleman was I cannot now state, but presume he gave him the true answer.

It was sometime after this that the rumor got afloat among the good people of Dover, prejudicial to the chastity of Mrs. Witham, occasioned by her conduct while there.—People here, like some of the people in New Portland, it would seem, were possessed of a good degree of curiosity, and of a disposition to meddle with their neighbors affairs if any capital, in the way of news, could be made of them, and they were not long in discovering that Mrs. W. had improper intercourse with H—, the person mentioned in the letter at the close of the last chapter.

The stories, after a while, become so cur-

rent and contained so much of probability, that there were few people in Dover who did not give them more or less credit. But they did not reach their climax until the latter part of the year 1829 and the former part of 1830, when Mrs. Witham had gone to her father's in New Portland.

In the spring of 1830, a young man made his appearance in Foxcroft—the village of which is only separated from that of Dover by the Piscataquis river—inquiring for one H., saying he had a letter from Mrs. Witham to him, which she had desired him to deliver into H——'s own hand. He was directed to where he would probably find him. He went in search of him, but soon after returned to the store where he had made the inquiry, and threw the letter upon the counter saying he could not find him, and requested some one to give him the letter as soon as convenient.

From the reports respecting these two persons, and the circumstances connected with this letter, as might be expected, there

was much curiosity to ascertain its contents. It seems that no one dared to break the seal of the letter then, but in the careless handling which it received it was delivered of its contents in a manner as unexpected as it was gratifying to the inquisitive people who handled it. A paper dropped from the letter, of which the following is a true copy, in Mrs. Witham's hand writing.

"SIR—It has often been urged by you, that the warm temperament of youth renders it next to impossible to adhere strictly to the cold precepts of rigid chastity; and, therefore, that a few almost unavoidable deviations from right ought not to be reckoned with those odious vices which have been subjects of animadversion. You grant that the strong propensities of nature may in some degree, extenuate the criminality of indulgence; but it is my opinion that many can testify that, by resolute abstinence from illicit pleasures, the passions may be brought under the easy dominion of reason, while gratification is perpetually adding fuel to the

fire, till health, reputation, peace of mind, and every innocent and rational enjoyment are consumed in the flame ; and not only that, but those painful reflections which necessarily result from a consciousness of having broken the Divine laws, and the right rule of reason ; of having wantonly abused our talents and the gift which an indulgent Providence has bestowed on us ; and of essentially injuring our connections, and society in general.

"The situation of her whose trembling hand now scribbles, is extremely painful.—She whose circumstances are now unknown to all, devises and plans means and ways to keep them so ; but the time is not far distant when people must know what they are not, as yet, in the least suspicious of—

"On my arrival at this place, I met with an uncle of mine, who voluntarily offered to take my children and bring them up well ; and he is able to give them a good education, and do well by them, and I expect, as soon as the ground settles, to go to Port-

land and stay a number of months, and hope all will remain a profound secret.— My father and all of my friends advise me to think no more of the man who has left me in such a thoughtless manner—and you must think I have many things to think of, and no person to whom I dare speak or converse with ; sometimes I am hardly capable of knowing what I am about.

When nature in her bloom doth smile
 Shall I go mourning all the while?
 I will recite all mournful thoughts,
 Call nature in with all her arts.
 You may expect from what I've said
 Mine is a heart that's filled with dread;
 My thoughts are wavering as the wind,
 There is a cause, so I must end."

Adieu.

I have the original of this document now in my possession, and have carefully compared the writing with that of Mrs. Witham, and have no kind of doubt that it is her's. The envelope, containing this paper, was afterwards broken open, and found to contain no other writing whatever. It was directed to H——.

After this document was made public, it chanced to fall into the hands of a gentleman of the vicinity, a friend of Mr. Hanson, who considered it his duty to inform him what had occurred, and to forward him a copy. Afterwards he received from Mr. Hanson, the following letter in reply.

"NEW PORTLAND, 5th July, 1830.

"SIR—In haste I sit down to write you a few lines. Should have written before in answer to yours in which came the copy, but have been waiting to see how things would turn. Hannah mistrusted, soon after I received yours, what had taken place, although I did not intend that any one, even of my own family, should know of it; and put the letter where I thought no one could get it. Yet I found out that she had got it and read it, I should think about six weeks ago; and about that time, or just before she got mine, she received one from H—, who wrote that it had been intimated to him, there, that she had sent him a letter, and that it had been kept from him by some

person. She shbwed me the letter from H—, and at the same time I got mine from you, and the copy and read it to her. She then declared, and still stands to it, that she never wrote it. I then privately carried them to my daughter R—, who married Dr. V—, and got her to put them in her trunk, that Hannah could not get them ;— for she had threatened to get them and de stroy them. Not long since she took an opportunity, when R— was gone out, and went in and opened her trunk, and took them out and said she had burned them ;— but since that I found out that she had not destroyed the one I had from you ; and she told a certain person who told me, that she meant to keep that and give it to H—, and that it should cost you and I \$500. I have since got it from her. She has for some time been telling that she wanted to go to Dover and that she would go if she went afoot. I have frequently told her that she had better keep away from there, and that I should not provide any way for her

to go. Last Thursday she went to Mr. J's, about 1 1-2 miles, as she said, to weave a web for herself and R—. The next day she came home and got a bundle of her clothes; and Saturday night there came a boy that lives at Mr. J's, and carried off another bundle. That was the last time I heard from her till this morning a young man told me he saw her Saturday night at Mr. John Gray's, in Embden, 14 miles, on her way to Dover. How she got there I don't know, nor where she is going. If you see her, I wish you to be careful about what you say to her, and pay little or no attention to what she says to you. Don't harbor her or trust her on my account, for I shall not send for her, nor pay any expenses on her account, for she, notwithstanding I sent for her and the children out of pity to them, has caused me more trouble since she has been here, than all that ever I experienced in my life. I expect, if she can see H—, that there will be trouble if it is possible that they can make it. I want you to

keep that letter till I see you by all means. The whole business respecting the letter would have been kept within my family, after she got it the first time, if she had not told of it herself. Notwithstanding she was so base in the first place, and secondly to get the letter as she did, I charged her for her own credit sake to keep it where it was, yet she must leak it out.

"Keep every thing within due bounds till I see you.

"Yours very truly,

"NATHAN HANSON."

As confirmation of what I have said in regard to my disposition to send for my family to come to Boston, at the close of the fifth chapter, I will here introduce a letter from Mr. Hanson to the same gentleman to whom he wrote the former letter, relative to an act of mine at the time. This letter is evidence of another fact, viz:—that Mr. Hanson was exceedingly anxious to get that troublesome woman off his hands, and as far from him as possible.

"NEW PORTLAND, 15th July, 1830.

"SIR—Yours of the 9th came to hand by Mr. P——; and I would just observe that there came a letter to my office the next Monday after Hannah left here Saturday, from Witham to her. He stated that he thought of giving her an invitation to go to Boston in the fall, and that he was in the trucking business and was doing well. He wrote as though he was anxious to see her and the children, and that he intended to provide for them as soon as possible; and I hope he will, and that she will keep on till she gets there with him, since she has gone off in the way she has; and hope no one will be so unwise as to injure their feelings towards each other. She has been a continual source of trouble to me ever since soon after she came home. I have had to encounter difficulty with my wife on her account, which has made my trouble greater. I want you to inform me as soon as convenient what arrangements she makes there, and how she progresses in her undertaking.

I should have sent the letter from her husband, to her, if I had known where she was.

"Yours, in haste, truly,

"NATHAN HANSON."

It was about the time this letter was written that I received the letter, at the close of the chapter next preceding this, which changed my determination to send for Mrs. Witham.

From the letter written by Mrs. Witham to H—, accidentally made public in Dover and Foxcroft, it will be understood that while she was in New Portland in 1830, she was in an exceedingly delicate situation ;—and so in fact it proved, if affidavits in the Appendix are to be believed. (C)—(F)—(H)—(J)

From these it appears that Mrs. W. while at her father's was delivered of a child ;—that she took great pains to conceal the fact that she was pregnant ; and that it was supposed she took medicine which produced an abortion ; that the child was thrown into the stream, and that this was one of the

causes of the difficulty between her and her father.

Other facts appear in those affidavits showing that she was a most unnatural daughter. What woman, who was not lost to all sense of decency,—to say nothing of that natural delicacy which is peculiarly the property of woman—would so degrade herself as to charge her father, in the presence of her mother-in-law, with an unnatural crime, to alienate them from each other ? (D)

Mrs. Witham left New Portland for Dover, about the first of July 1830. The inducements to return to that place must have been strong indeed, for she started on foot, and allowed no obstacle to retard her progress. After she had gone about one mile on her journey, she came to a stream of considerable size, called the Seven Mile Brook. The water in the stream was about four feet in depth, and the current was exceedingly rapid. How she crossed it alive in the way she did, is wonderful. No boat, or assistance of any kind was at hand ; she

heeded it not, but committed herself to the water, and at length reached the other side. But notwithstanding the exertions she must have undergone in fording this stream, and her uncomfortable situation afterward, they had no effect to keep down those passions which had been her ruin ; for she had not proceeded more than a mile from the brook, if report speaks truth, before an opportunity for their indulgence occurred, of which she took advantage.

By an affidavit it appears that Mrs. W. said soon after she left New Portland, that she was on her way to Dover to see a friend who was going to assist her to money, that she might go to Boston. The deponent says that the last she heard of her after she left her house, she was "on horseback with a man."

Her next stopping place, that I have any account of, was at Mr. G——'s in Embden, some twelve miles on her journey. While there, from some circumstances and her conversation, Mrs. G—— had suspicions

that all was not right with her. Of her own accord she stated to Mrs. G—— that her step-mother had accused her of having a child at her house, and that it was not a fact. But Mrs. G—— was satisfied, from her appearance, that it was true.

From this place she was conveyed about twenty five miles, for which she paid the person who carried her, a shawl ; and from here she went to Dover, about twenty miles, on foot !

Shortly after her arrival at Foxcroft she had an interview with H——. On the next day she was with him, at his place of business, a long time. She tarried some days in Dover and Foxcroft, and was much in the streets. She exhibited a good deal of boldness in public, and was an object of derision and contempt wherever she went.— She was shunned by every person of respectability, and the good people of those towns thought themselves well rid of her when she departed.

Her whole conduct while in Dover, after

the first few months of our residence there, had been so disgraceful that I do not wonder at the treatment she received from the people. I knew something of her wickedness while in that place, but I presume I knew very little of it. Every short time some new fact comes to my knowledge which adds to the baseness of her character. Since I commenced this account of her conduct, a gentlemen of respectability has given me an affidavit containing some facts relative to her base conduct of which I did not before dream.

CHAPTER VII.

Mrs. Witham leaves Dover. Imposes upon an old Gentleman in Bangor. By false statements obtains assistance from my friend.--- Goes to Boston.

After leaving Foxcroft and Dover, Mrs. W. went to Bangor on her way to Boston. I presume she obtained the funds with

which to pay the expenses of her journey from her particular friend in Foxcroft;—though they were probably of so small an amount that she considered it necessary to husband them well, that she might not want before she reached her place of destination. She called on a respectable old gentleman in Bangor, and informed him that his son, who lived in Dover, had requested her to call at his house and make it her abode while in that place. When this gentleman came to know the truth, he found he had been entertaining a woman with whom his son did not speak, and thought a disgrace to have any communication with whatever. Her kind host, however, makes the best of being thus imposed upon, and tells the story with a good deal of humor.

While in Bangor, Mrs. W. called on a friend of mine, (Mr. S. True) and, with her usual tact, persuaded him to assist her.—She represented to him that I was in Boston, sick with a fever, and had sent for her to visit me. He, of course, supposed her

statements were true, and procured her a passage to Boston. Her representations were all false, as my friend has since discovered.

By such means did the present Mrs. Kinney get herself from the then last scenes of her disgrace to the recent theatre of acts such as might be expected from a woman whose previous life had been a constant scene of dissimulation, dissoluteness, thieving and fraud.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mrs. Witham's first appearance in Boston.---Her account of the cause of her going there. The 'Caravan Man.' Mr. Witham's first knowledge of her in Boston. Their conversation. Her treatment of him. Their final separation.

I have now arrived at the period when Mrs. Witham made her appearance in Boston for the first time. Her account of the

cause of her going there is very concise.— She says that her father kept a public house in New Portland. “A gentleman stopped there, who was travelling from Boston. My father made some inquiries, and learned that Mr. Witham, it was supposed, was a single man. This conversation prompted me to come to Boston to see what our prospects really were.” Thereby hangs a tale.

This “gentleman,” I have reason to believe, was the “Caravan man” referred to in the affidavit of Nathan Thomas, (F.) with whom she had a nocturnal acquaintance, and who permitted her to take from his finger, during their acquaintance, a ring. But I will not go further into the details of this singular transaction. From her father’s letter, and from her statement to my friend in Bangor, I am inclined to think the reader will hardly be able to gather enough upon which to found a belief that her reasons for visiting Boston were such as she gives.

Sometime in July 1830, while at my work in Boston, some one informed me that

there was a woman in Charlestown who called herself my wife. Well recollecting that there was once such a person in existence, who had been to me the cause of more misery than I had suffered from all things else, I was thunderstruck at the information. I could hardly think that she would have the impudence to follow me in this manner: and I could account for it in no other way than that she had repented of her misdeeds, and had sought me out to acknowledge her faults, and again obtain my favor. Impress ed with this idea, I left my work and repair ed to Charlestown. In the Post Office I met with Mrs. Witham. I addressed her very coolly, and inquired her reason for coming there. She replied that she had come to see me, for she had suffered such ill treatment at her father's, and at other places in Maine, that she could not stay there any longer. I inquired if she expect ed to live with me again? Her reply was in the affirmative. I then repeated to her the contents of the letter I had received rel-

ative to her conduct while in Dover, and told her that I should never live with her again. Upon this she fell to crying and denying the truth of the story, until I could not resist a feeling of pity, although I was satisfied that her denial was absolutely false.

At this time she was indeed in a woful condition. Her clothes were hardly decent, and she was entirely destitute of means to support herself; but she was still my wife, and I could not see her suffer, and I told her I would obtain her a boarding place until she could find a passage back to Maine. I succeeded in getting her into a female boarding house in Charlestown for a short time. Shortly after this, I found a packet in which she might return to Maine, as she had agreed to do, and I furnished her with money and clothes to the amount of sixteen dollars and upwards, to pay her expenses, and told her never to look to me again for assistance, for, as she now had good reason to believe, I was resolved to have nothing more to do with her.

About a week after I first saw her in Charlestown, the person with whom I had engaged her board, called upon me while I was at my work in Boston and demanded payment of his bill up to that time, and requested me to take my wife away immediately. The bill I paid, but I had scarcely any conversation with the man, for I feared from his appearance that she had been guilty of some outrageous conduct while at his house, therefore I feared to ask him any questions concerning her.

My feelings were a good deal agitated at this occurrence, but every additional transaction which I had with reference to that woman served to confirm me in the determination I had formed, to leave her to follow the bent of her own inclinations. When she had obtained the money and clothes, she informed me that she had no intention of returning to Maine, but had concluded to remain in Boston. I told her that as I had lost all confidence in her word, I should not trouble myself about her, in future. Upon

this she replied that she cared not for my assistance, that she could take care of herself—that if she could not in one way she could in another. This I knew full well from bitter experience, and I also knew that aught I could do for her would not prevent her from resorting to that other way, whether for gain or for gratification ; and all feeling of pity for her was, at this parting, banished from my bosom.

Some days after she had made known to me her determination not to return to Maine, I was walking in Purchase Street, and was stopped by a lady, who appeared to be a good deal interested in Mrs. Witham, and who wished to know about the difficulty between myself and her, and the reason of our not living together. I thought it best to keep my own counsels, therefore I gave no answer to the inquiry, save that I should never again live with her. The lady spoke in her favor, and expressed a wish that I might be induced to change my determination ; but I told her that I knew her

far better than she could, and that my decision was final. I could not wonder that Mrs. W. had deceived this lady, who knew nothing of her past history, when she had for years made me, who had opportunity upon opportunity of knowing her thoroughly, her dupe ; and I felt that this lady was but one of many whose feelings would be enlisted in her favor by her arts.

But, notwithstanding Mrs. Witham's full knowledge of my resolution to have no further connection with her, she was not persuaded but that, by artful management, she might succeed in again entrapping me ; and she took an opportunity when I was sick of a fever, to put in exercise her remarkable talents for the purpose. She appeared in my room, apparently overcome with grief at my situation, and with tears streaming down her cheeks, begged permission to nurse and take care of me. This apparent kindness, although I well knew it was feigned, came very near overcoming my resolution. All her former acts of kindness rushed into my

mind at once, and came near obscuring entirely, the base misdeeds of which she had been guilty. But, fortunately, my feelings did not completely conquer my reason, and I summoned resolution to tell her, plainly, that I could not receive any assistance from her. It was doubtful, at this time, whether I should recover from my illness; but my determination was unalterably fixed, never to receive aught at her hands, forgive her though I might. She left me suffused in tears. Her tarry was about fifteen minutes; and this was the last conversation with her I ever had. I have *seen* her once since, and my personal acquaintance with her conduct then ended.

The account I have above given, relative to our meeting and separating while in Boston, is the truth. Nothing material occurred there between us than what I have related. The statement which she has made in her Book, relative to our conversation, is incorrect; and the certificates she has published therein, purporting to be subscribed

by me, are base forgeries. I have seen the original of these certificates since their publication, and others have compared them with my hand writing for ten years past,—the result of the comparison will be seen by the certificates in the Appendix, marked (I.)

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Witham leaves Boston. A Letter. He goes to Bangor. Takes some steps towards obtaining a divorce. Is informed that Mrs. Witham has obtained a divorce. By advice, Mr. W. then stays proceedings. Mrs. Witham's tact.

When I had partially regained my health, I left Boston for my father's house in Maine, where I remained until I had fully recovered. While at my father's, I addressed a letter to a gentleman in the vicinity of Dover, who, I supposed, would know something of Mrs. W's misconduct while there, (which I did not) for such facts as he might

have in his possession respecting it. In reply he sent me the following letter:—

“OCTOBER 13th, 1830.

“DEAR SIR—I received your letter of the 3d inst., stating you had heard many unfavorable reports about your wife, &c., and that a letter* was written from her to H—, &c., and wishing me to send you the letter. I have the letter in her hand writing in my possession now, and shall keep it until I see you. There have been bad reports about your wife, and I think they are true. If I could see you one hour I could put you in a way very much to your interest.

“In haste, yours, &c.”

After I left my father's I went to Portland, where I remained about a year. From Portland I came to Bangor, (my present place of residence,) in 1831. I have not since been at Boston, and, of course, have not known much respecting Mrs. W's conduct while there.

*The letter alluded to is the anonymous letter in Chapter VI.

After I came to Bangor, I consulted Counsel upon the subject of obtaining a divorce from Mrs. Witham; and it was not until I had obtained an Order of Notice, that I heard that she had taken any steps to effect the same thing in regard to me.—The first information that I had of this, was that she had obtained a decree of divorce! I presume that her Order of Notice was published in the newspapers, which is probably the reason of my not having been apprised of her movements in the matter, no personal notice was ever given me, and a Decree of Divorce was made without my having any opportunity, to refute the charges on which it was obtained. The Court, doubtless, acted properly in the business;—but the testimony, given to substantiate the charges was false, and was obtained in a way in which a person of Mrs. Kinney's character would be likely to obtain it. But notwithstanding the unfair means which were resorted to to obtain this decree, I could not but feel glad that I was liberated from

the destroyer of my happiness, at whatever price. It was not a pleasant reflection that I had been adjudged, by the highest tribunal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to be guilty of an act of which I was innocent, but I was relieved from most of the pain which accompanied it, by the counter reflection that the loss of character which I might suffer in consequence was, in fact, gain.

The whole course adopted by Mrs. Kinney, in her Book, to injure me, is evidence of the exquisite tact which she possesses.— She always made it a study how to enlist sympathy in her favor, and prejudice against one she hated or feared, when she pleased, and she here proves that she has not studied in vain.

"I lived a retired life," she says. "I know that in all such cases, more or less of censure attached to both parties. I did not, nor do I now, wish to implicate any person. I merely wish to show the doings of the Court, and the letters left with me. The

idea that the man from whom I was divorced, was father to my children, was enough to make me *silent*. * * * To make the subject one for conversation, is what I have always tried to avoid—for the reason where there is no fuel, there the fire goeth out. It was evident that, at that time, my feelings on the subject were like the still current that flows on enclosed by a cold, deep body of ice, unaffected by the charms that the world holds out for our enjoyment. This state of mind was easily perceived by those with whom I was conversant." Then follows her first acquaintance with Mr. Kinney.

Now, is there any better way, I ask the reader, which she could have adopted to enlist sympathy in her behalf, or to excite prejudice against me, than this.

The impression received is, that she is a saint, almost a martyr, to persecution received at my hands ; that she suffers in silence, unaffected by the charms of the world, and that she wishes not to utter a word of re-

proach against the person who was the cause of all her misery !

From her previous history, as I have detailed it, I think the course she has adopted will be attributed to different motives from those to which she would have it. With what enthusiasm does she speak of Mr. Kinney, when she gives the account of their first acquaintance. "Unaccustomed as I was to the ways and manners of the city, Mr. Kinney was to me a valuable friend—such an one as the best person on earth would not blush to own." By her affectation of unhappiness, and her modesty in regard to its cause, she succeeded in enlisting his feelings in her favor, and he became her dearest friend ! This was before her marriage to Mr. Freeman ; and she had no female friend to whom she could confide her griefs, but must unfold her overflowing heart to a man—a *young* man, who, but a short time before, was a stranger !

CHAPTER X.

Mrs. Kinney's account of her acquaintance with Kinney and Freeman, examined. Her contradictions.

There is an attempt by Mrs. Kinney to throw an air of romance about the transactions between herself and Kinney and Mr. Freeman, previous to her marriage with the latter person ; and, at first thought, many readers may very naturally imagine her a wonderful heroine. But when they read her account carefully, the flimsy net-work that she has thrown over it will not prevent their seeing something very singular in the whole affair.

After her first acquaintance with Kinney, which one would think was tainted with a little of the tender passion, she seems to have given herself up to his tutelar care,—considering him a sort of guardian,—until she saw her cousin Freeman. With him she suddenly become so enamored that she can hardly find language to express her feelings ; and poor Kinney, disappointed, de-

spairing lover as he was, was left to shift for himself, and to utter his useless complaints, receiving from her the usual amount of heroine sympathy for his doleful situation!—Let us examine the story, and see its consistency.

About the last of July 1832, she made her first visit to Lowell with Kinney. When she arrived in Lowell, she was informed by her brother, that Mr. Freeman was there, upon which she insisted she would see him. This determination appears to have alarmed the love-sick Kinney, and he endeavored to dissuade her from carrying it into effect, but she would not be dissuaded, whether F. was a married man or not, for she had not thought of marrying again! And she saw him.

Although she had not seen her cousin for fifteen years before, she recognized him "very quickly." "It was an introduction," she says, "to a *happy* but *painful* acquaintance. It had been eleven years since I received his last letter. I had always cher-

ished an agreeable remembrance of him.— His letters, too, were calculated to make impressions which time or distance could *never* remove. * * Directly after I arrived, he asked me where my husband was—if he was dead? I replied, with a painful heart, “more than dead to me.” He was too much overcome, ill in health as he was, to converse on the subject. I was also deeply affected. He wished me not to think of returning that night, and the family where he boarded invited me to stop till morning. Mr. Kinney was sent for, and was also invited to stop till morning. The next day I found myself much more composed, and my cousin better. I then gave him a brief history of the past. He was much affected.—“Have you forgotten,” said he, “the last letter I ever wrote you?” How could I answer? I replied,

“How can I but remember that which it is impossible to forget? Although, in one sense of the word, forgotten for years, yet it lives again with feelings unutterable.”

She was solicited to make a visit here, but she and Kinney thought it was not best.

"I proposed to return," she proceeds;— "as I was about to leave, Mr. Freeman insisted on a promise that I would return—and, as I left him, I said,

"I will return."

"On our return to Boston, Mr. Kinney said much that made me unhappy. There was in Kinney a superiority of mind which few attain by birth or education. * * * The tenderness of his heart, his ready, active benevolence, and his sympathy with misfortune were traits in his character spoken of by every body who knew him. Much as Mr. Kinney had done to restore me to my usual cheerfulness; much as I respected him, and under deep obligations as I was to him for the thousand acts of kindness he had bestowed upon me, I could not wish to marry him, although I encouraged him that my mind might be changed in that respect, as time would probably alleviate the sensitiveness of my feelings on the subject of the

sorrows through which I had passed. *I was truly affected on being confident of the interest these hopes had taken in his heart, which I was not aware of till my return from Lowell.* I had promised to go back to Lowell, and he knew it. He knew, too, my friend's feelings when I left. He told me to go, and ordered a coach to come to the door to take me back to Lowell. It was the kindlier feelings of his nature that prompted him to do it. How could I but respect such a character? It was with a *heavy heart* that I left him. I had a *deep* interest in his happiness. It was destroying my own happiness to witness the unhappiness of another."

Now, this is all very romantic, perhaps, and perhaps it is not. It strikes me that all high-minded, but disappointed lovers, have aforetime been treated in the same manner, by the lovely objects of their affections, if those veritable histories, called novels, are to be believed. But there is sometimes a great difference between facts actual and facts related, as will be seen in this case.

If we pass from the passage above, (copied from the 9th and 10th pages of her book,) to the 20th and 21st, we shall find some little discrepancy in her statements.

On the 20th page is a letter from Kinney to her father, dated August 17, 1832, not nearly a month after she first went to Lowell, from which I extract the following.

"Perhaps you are aware that I wrote you a line about six months since. At that time I had much interest in the welfare of Hannah, but did not dare to indulge it, for I feared she would never think of changing her situation. Those feelings I kept aloof, waiting for time to accomplish all—trusting to him who holds the destiny of all creation in his hands. Since I wrote you, I have conversed with Hannah much upon the subject, and have thought the time might come when we might be one. *Hannah expressed some feelings similar to those in a letter to you some time since, as she told me,* to which she has received no answer, though

she has *long and anxiously* looked for one, with an expression of your feelings on the subject. She has delayed writing again. * * * She wished I might write you, and I felt it a duty I owe all concerned, for I did not wish her friends to think I was disinterested."

Between this letter and the reply of her father, the following remarks of her's intervene :—

"I had written my father on the subject *before I went to Lowell*. I wished some advice from him ; but, as he had given some advice before, he did not wish to give it in this case decidedly."

In Mr. Hanson's reply to Kinney, he says, "if you should think best that a connection take place between you, I have no objections." He says that he received the letter to which Kinney referred.

Aside from all other knowledge of a person, who puts a book before the public as a true history of occurrences, what opinion can be entertained of her veracity who can-

not make her statements hang together for ten pages in course? Mrs. Kinney says in one place that she was not aware of the deep root Kinney's hopes had taken in his heart, until her *return from Lowell*, and that she could not wish to marry him. In another place she says she had written her father upon the subject of marrying Kinney *before she went to Lowell*. And it appears from Kinney's letter it was months before!

This shows how extremely careful those persons should be who attempt to deceive the public in this manner, lest the evidence of their iniquity some where peep out. Had she suppressed these two letters, which appear to be foisted into the book for no other purpose than to enlarge its dimensions, her departure from the truth in this instance, might not have been discovered.

But the evidence which she herself offers of her inability to adhere to the truth is not the only evidence of her destitution of principle at the time of her acquaintance with Mr. Freeman. I have before me a letter



written by a person who was much in her family, (and had a good opportunity of knowing her conduct,) to a friend, which confirms it, if confirmation be necessary.—

The letter is dated Boston, Feb. 7th, 1840, and contains the following :—

“I will now try to tell you a little what Mrs. Kinney’s proceedings have been since I came to Boston. When I came here she was kept by a Mr. Kinney; and not long after, she was courted by a cousin of her’s, (Rev. Mr. Freeman, of Lowell, Mass.,) and after some trouble with his church about her character he married her, as they did not prove any thing against her. She lived with Mr. Freeman one or two days over one year, and he died very suddenly. It is supposed and verily believed, by many, that she and Kinney knew more about his death than they ought, but I am not able to say as to that; I can say though, that Mr. Kinney corresponded with and visited her without Mr. Freeman’s knowledge; and more too, that he was very unhappy while he did

live. The next spring after his death, she opened a Millinery Shop in Lowell, and kept it until fall, when she failed. The next spring she came to Boston again and lived with Kinney, and kept a boarding house about two years, when she dismissed her boarders and said she was going to be married. They moved into a house with another family, who threatened to turn them out if they were not married, and, upon that, they thought it best to be."

How does this letter dispel from her statement the romance which she has endeavored to incorporate into it! She, who would be considered one of the purest, most adorable, but most unfortunate creatures in existence, with two lovers at her feet, each of whom is possessed of all the excellencies, and none of the defects, of his sex, proves to be a mere courtesan,—kept by one of these lovers and sought by the other, who was a clergyman, ignorant of the arts of women, believing all of them good, and incapable of such gross deception as

this one was now practicing upon him,—in marriage!

CHAPTER XI.

Mr. Freeman's attachment to Mrs. K. The course of her friends in regard to his marrying her. His unhappiness during his marriage. Her statements respecting her acquaintance with Kinney, examined.

It is undoubtedly true that Mr. Freeman was strongly attached to this woman before he married her. The letters purporting to have been written by him, that she has seen fit to publish,—which, by the way, no woman possessed of the least refinement of feeling, under hardly any circumstances would have done,—if they are genuine, as well as the fact that he married her when, it is well known, many reports were in existence unfavorable to her character, prove this pretty clearly.

About the time of the trial of Mrs. Kinney, I was in conversation with a gentleman, (one of her connexions,) and he told me that when he learned Mr. Freeman intended to marry her, he wrote to him and informed him relative to the bad reputation she had sustained, and warned him not to connect himself with her until he had made thorough inquiries relative to her character.

The advice he appears to have followed, for, by a deposition in the Appendix, (J) it seems that he visited Boston and made inquiries about her, about the time he received the letter.

The opposition which members of his church made to the marriage was enough to deter any one whose feelings were not enlisted beyond his control, from taking such a step, though this opposition were based upon reports which were not entirely substantiated by proof; for he must have known that such reports in constant circulation, could not be groundless, and they would be the cause of diminishing his influence, be-

sides being to him a source of permanent vexation. But the cunning woman, by the use of those talents which nature has so bountifully bestowed upon her, (L) continued to maintain the ascendancy she had acquired over him, and he suffered himself to be drawn into a situation in which, during the remainder of his days, he was most miserable.

She intimates that many of the reports, which were in circulation to her injury, were occasioned by the visits of Kinney, although her husband approved them. From the correspondence which she has published, purporting to have passed between those two gentlemen, just previous to the marriage, it appears that there had been a misunderstanding between them respecting her. That Kinney had been remarkably attentive to her—had visited her at Mrs. Rice's, "often too," and shown her such kind of attention as excited Mrs. Rice's suspicions ; and she, according to Kinney's account, "put the most unfavorable construction upon it."

He probably succeeded in doing away any unfavorable impressions that Mr. Freeman might have received in consequence of his over politeness to his intended wife, or this gentleman would not have married her.

She further intimates that they were on the most intimate terms until Mr. Freeman's death; that Mr. F., was in the habit of calling on Kinney when he was in Boston, and that just before his death he accepted a present from him; that Kinney used to return his calls, and frequently rendered him little services in Boston. Surely if this be true, they must have been upon intimate terms, indeed. But how was the fact? If the reader will turn to the letter in the Tenth Chapter of this work, he will find that "Mr. Freeman was very unhappy while he did live." Why was this? Was it not because of the intimacy that existed between his wife and Kinney? The answer is found in the affidavit of Mehitable J. Jordan, (C.) It appears there on the authority of Rev. E. G. Leach, that while Mrs. Kinney

lived with Mr. Freeman, Kinney frequently visited her, and he had known him to give her ten or twenty dollars at a time, and that she told her husband that the rich members of the church gave her the money. That Mr. Freeman was jealous of his wife and forbid Kinney coming to his house, and that Mr. Freeman was very unhappy.

This statement of Mr. Leach was made in 1839, and it coincides singularly with the letter above alluded to; but the author of that letter, I have reason to believe, never had any communication with him, upon the subject whatever.

Mrs. Kinney's intimacy with Kinney never ceased, from the time of her first acquaintance with him until his death. During the life of Mr. Freeman, and after his death (as it appears from her Book,) she retained the same fond feelings for Kinney, that she possessed before. She says, "Mr. Kinney called upon us twice while we boarded with Mrs. Butler, but never after we kept house to my knowledge, while Mr. Freeman lived."

She well said *us*, but she could not say, with any expectation of being believed, that he did not called upon *her*, or see her more times than that. The letter says, "I can say, though, that Mr. Kinney corresponded with, and visited, her, *without Mr. Freeman's knowledge*."

The person who wrote this did not do it without having sufficient proof of the fact. So this equivocal statement of Mrs. Kinney shows how near she can come to a falsehood and not be guilty of it. There is no way to which she has not resorted to make her story plausible, and, it appears to me, that her success is about equal to her deserts.

It being clearly shown that Kinney's intercourse with her was the same from the time of his first acquaintance with her until their marriage,—notwithstanding her attempts to make it appear that it was otherwise during her union with Mr. Freeman,—the question arises, why did she allow his visits if she was aware of their impropriety?

She says that they were certainly painful to her ; and that, after he had proposed to marry her, she "felt that many, perhaps, of her best friends would abandon her, if she married him—that they would infer that she *had encouraged his calls*, (which was not the case,) and, perhaps, believe the slanders which the cruel tongues of prejudice had heaped upon her."* Here it appears that she knew that it was wrong for him to call, and that she was suffering in her character in consequence ; but it does not appear that she gave him the least hint that his visits were not acceptable. Indeed it is evident that she was very happy to receive not only his visits, but his presents, also.†

*Pages 58 and 59 of her book.

†Page 57—see the story of the Oranges.

CHAPTER XII.

A remark relative to reputation. Mrs. Kinney's reputation wherever she has been known. A recent occurrence in which she figured in Boston, in a manner not very satisfactory to herself.

I will here, with the reader's permission, throw in a common remark relative to reports affecting character, which, I fear, is not sufficiently impressed upon every mind. There probably never were very many instances where reputation was injured by reports, when there was no foundation for them. It is true that sometimes the foundation may be trivial, but almost invariably it is serious: and no person can go from one place to another where he has not before been known, and have the same character, without the existence of the same causes for it.

Now, in the case of Mrs. Kinney, wherever she has been for any length of time, her character has always been the same.—In New Portland, in Dover, in Boston, and

Lowell, similar imputations existed against it. She would not have been so narrowly watched in the first mentioned place, or avoided in Dover; the married deacon in Lowell, who went to ride with her would not have been guilty of the unbecoming conduct she attributed to him; Mrs. M—— would not have said to Mrs. Flynn in Boston, that her conduct in Lowell was such that they would have no fellowship with her; —she would not have been told, at the Sabbath School in Boston, that her presence was not agreeable, nor would she have been watched at the Bromfield House, after her acquittal "by a brainless fellow, whose name she finds it difficult to conceal," had not similar and serious causes for those imputations existed.

I think it has been made to appear in this book, that causes of magnitude have always existed for the bad reputation Mrs. Kinney has had. But lest some people should not be perfectly satisfied on this point, because of the wonderful degree of

piety she pretends to possess, and the expressions of submission to the will of Heaven with which her book abounds, I will add the substance of the statement of an elderly lady to me, of a circumstance that occurred in Mrs. Kinney's shop, of which she had personal knowledge, which shows that her ideas respecting the appropriation of the property of others as late as the summer of 1840, had not materially changed from those she possessed in 1822, when Mr. and Mrs. Weymouth discovered their goods in her possession. (B.)

Mrs. H——, is an elderly lady, who has resided in the vicinity of Boston, and bears a reputation unimpeachable. She says that in May or June, 1840, she was in Boston, and was desirous of finding some one who would make some repairs on her bonnet.— She was recommended to call on Mrs. Kinney, who kept a shop on Bromfield Street, which she did, and left her bonnet. In due time she called for it. While Mrs. Kinney was bringing it, Mrs. H—— took from her

purse one, of two, five dollar gold pieces, which it contained, and laid it, with the purse, upon the table, thinking she would not pay for the bonnet until she had examined it. After examination she found it was not done to her satisfaction, but Mrs. Kinney told her it should be in a short time. The lady put the gold into her purse and again placed it upon the table, and left the shop for a few moments. When she returned she found the purse but no money! The following conversation then took place:

“Where is the money which was in my purse ?” said Mrs. H——.

“It was the same when you left it as it was when the little girl gave it you,” replied Mrs. Kinney.

“Who has been here since I went out ?” asked Mrs. H——.

“Not a soul,” said Mrs. Kinney.

“Then one of you has my money ; and I am determined to have it !”

“We are respectable people here, madam, and are not accustomed to such imputations.”

"I cannot help that, my money is here, and I must and will have it."

"If any person has it, then, it must be the little girl who has just stepped out of the shop."

"Why did you let her go under such circumstances, if you think she has it?"

"She has had other opportunities to carry it to her father and mother, if she was so disposed, as she has been out of the shop two or three times before."

When the little girl returned, Mrs. Kinney said to her that she had given Mrs. H. the purse without the money.

The little girl denied having any knowledge of the money, she had not got it; she certainly never did such a thing as to take the money of others in her life.

Mrs. H—— told her it did no good to deny it; that the money must be found.

Mrs. Kinney then directed her to look.— She then went to searching, and after spending considerable time and labor, found the gold.

"There, madam," said she, when she found it, "I told you I had not got the money, and I had not, had I?" Mrs. Witham said not a word.

While Mrs. H—— was in conversation with Mrs. Kinney, she says she raised her voice to a pretty high key, and Mrs. K. desired her not to speak so loud, as it might be an injury to her; but the resolute lady replied that she thought it would be more injury to her if she did not find her money, than it would be for her to speak loud.

During the whole time of the search, a lady was present at work in the shop, and she afterwards observed to Mrs. H—— that if she had not shown so much determination she would not have recovered her money.

Mrs. H—— says she related the above circumstance to many individuals in Boston, previous to the death of G. T. Kinney; and that, if any one shall have the curiosity to know farther relative to the matter, they can call upon her son, Dr. G. W. H——,

Bangor, Maine. who will put them in a way to know the whole facts.

The evidence to her mind, that Mrs. K. undertook to embezzle this money, is so clear, and her statement of the affair such, that any one that hears it from her lips, will not doubt a moment that Mrs. K's appropriating propensity was as strong then as it ever had been before.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mrs. Kinney's early acquaintance with Mr. Freeman. Her interest in him. Remarks in regard to her administering poison. Conclusion.

I have a few words to say relative to the acquaintance which Mrs. Kinney had with Mr. Freeman, previous to that which immediately preceded their marriage, and upon which she lays so much stress in the beginning of her book.

It will be recollectcd that this latter acquaintance commenced with F. in July, 1832 ; and that she had not seen him for fifteen years previous. That she gives the impression that she was attached to him during their former acquaintance ; that they corresponded together, and that on the commencement of the latter acquaintance, the former "lived again with feelings unutterable." It will also be recollectcd that I was married to her in 1822, when she was not far from 17 years of age ; consequently she could not have been far from 14 years old when she last saw Mr. Freeman, at the period of their first acquaintance.

She says that, on hearing that she was to be married to me, he wrote her on the subject. "She had been under the guardian care of (her) parents, whose great object had been to promote her present and future happiness ; therefore the energies of my [her] mind, the decision of my [her] judgment had never been brought into action ; I was quite unfit to decide on a matter of so

much importance as the one then before me. However, his letter I never answered."

Now, by her own statement, her acquaintance with him was at an age when she did not know her own feelings, and that she had not sufficient judgment or decision to act for herself. How then her former acquaintance should live so "unutterably," 15 years afterwards, is past my power of comprehension.

It is not possible that a girl of her tender years in this enlightened century, when so few of the tender sex die of love, could have formed an attachment for a person she had seen but little, which would create such unutterable feelings at the age of 29 or 30.— But, aside from her account of the matter, and the reason of the thing, I may be supposed to know something of her acquaintance with Mr. Freeman in her earlier days.

Her acquaintance with him previous to her marriage to me was very limited; and this will be confirmed by many persons liv-

ing in the vicinity of Mrs. Kinney's native place. I am quite confident she had never seen him but once, and this was when she was *eleven* years of age, as I have been told by connexions of the Hanson family. I have been further informed that her correspondence with him amounted to next to none. That she never wrote him but one letter at this period, and this was when he was attending school at Waterville. The letter, however, he did not deign to answer. If she had such a letter or letters from Mr. Freeman as she represents, why did she not publish the contents? Did her delicacy prevent? If so, her delicacy must be exceedingly elastic, when at one time she could extend it to the publishing of letters which, of all others, should be kept private, and at another, contract it to the withholding of such as might be more entertaining, and less sacred. The fact is she has no such letters; for she would not have been so particular to keep them out of sight.

From the information I have obtained,

and from my own knowledge, I am verily of opinion that she never cared a straw for Mr. Freeman, at the time of her first, or during her second, acquaintance with him. But if I were inclined to believe that she did, the fact disclosed in the statement under L, in the Appendix, would satisfy me that any affection she had for him extended no farther than was for her interest, for the time being.

That Mrs. Kinney was guilty of administering poison to Mr. Freeman or to Mr. Kinney, the public have as good opportunity of judging as myself. It is certain that both of those men died suddenly, that there has been much excitement in the community relative to their deaths, and inquiry as to the cause, and that for the death of the latter person Mrs. Kinney has been tried for her life, and acquitted by a jury of her country ;—that her lonely situation and the sympathy of the press, operated upon the minds of the jury to effect this result, is not in my power to say :—she was acquitted.—

Upon this subject I will remark no farther.

In justice to Mrs. Kinney, I will say that, she never, to my knowledge, attempted my life by poisoning or in any other way ; and I hardly think that, up to the time I finally separated from her, she ever harbored a thought of my destruction, for an instant.

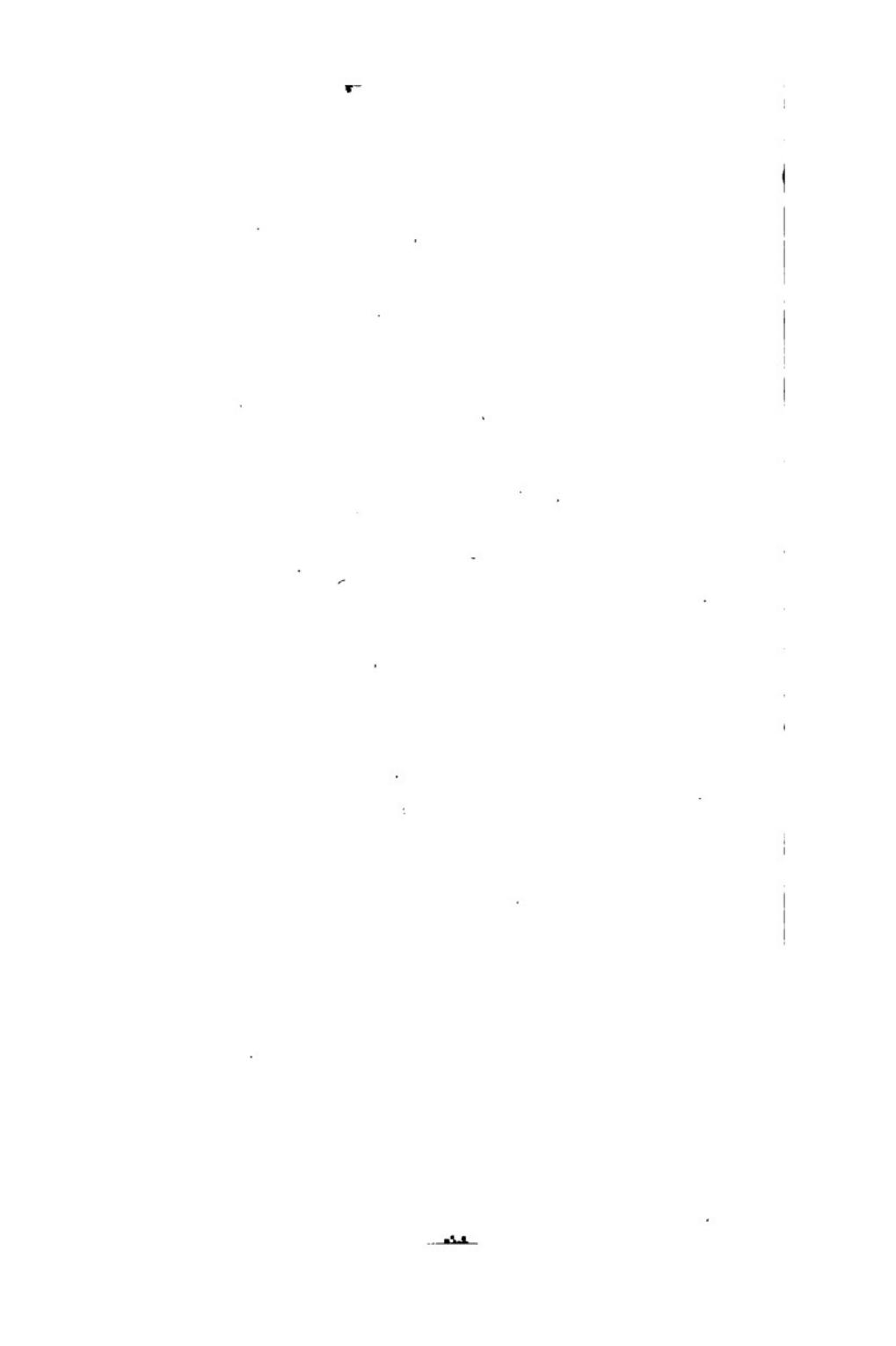
CONCLUSION.

As I apprehended, when I commenced this little work, wounds have been opened which I once hoped had been forever healed. It was with feelings of repugnance that I undertook the task ; for those with whom I have long been acquainted—at any period of my life—have a hold upon my feelings, that imperative duty alone can induce me to sever. That, in this instance, this duty existed, I had no hesitation in believing.

If, by my pursuing this duty, the public shall be disabused of impressions they

have received from the statements of Mrs. Kinney; and if Mrs. Kinney shall be induced to abandon the course she has all her lifetime pursued, so that the circle in which she moves, may be blessed by her good works, instead of being cursed by her deviations from the path of rectitude, my object will be fully accomplished.

THE END.



APPENDIX.

As I am but little known, away from the places where I have resided, I have thought it proper to throw into the form of an Appendix, some of the many depositions I have, to convince those who are unacquainted with me, that I have not attempted to amuse the public with a tissue of falsehoods. I think these few will satisfy all who shall honor my little book with a perusal, that the conduct and character of Mrs. K~~o~~ney are sufficiently bad ;—and that I was warranted in the course I took in leaving her as I did ; and that the good people of New England have long enough been imposed upon by her and other persons, whose whole aim is to destroy the moral tone of society, and to elevate themselves to a station,

the extreme opposite of that to which they belong.

The depositions are from persons of the first respectability, consequently they may be relied upon to the extent they go. There are many subjects of common report relative to the character of Mrs. Kinney, to which I have not alluded; and many provable matters which I have thought it proper to conceal. It may become necessary hereafter to disclose them to the public; but I trust that the pain of revealing them may never be experienced by me.

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(A.)

We, the subscribers, citizens of New Portland, do hereby certify, that it has been common report in this town, that the general character of Mrs. Hannah Kinney, formerly of this town, (now of Boston,) was notoriously bad, while she lived in this town, from and after the year 1822.

JOHN BUTTS,
ZEBULON TRUE,
NATHAN B. JORDAN,
J. R. CLARK,
IRA ELLIOT,
JOSHUA BUTTS,
THOMAS PENNELL,
JOHN W. JORDAN,
NATHAN PEABODY,
STEPHEN LARRABEE,
SETH THOMAS,
WARD SPOONER,
HIRAM WETHERN.

New Portland, Aug. 31, 1841.

SOMERSET ss.—I certify that I am well acquainted with all the persons whose names are attached to the above certificate, and that their statements may be fully relied upon.

WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(B.)

I, William Weymouth, of Kingfield, certify and say, in the month of January, 1822, Mr. Ward Witham commenced house-keeping in my house soon after his marriage with Hannah Hanson. I then lived in New Portland, near Mr. Hanson, Esq's. Mr. Witham and wife lived in my house until October following, during which time I missed several articles, among which was some molasses. We charged Mrs. Witham with taking them, and she acknowledged to my wife she had taken them, and requested my wife not to say any thing about it. After Mrs. Witham's acknowledgment, my wife and I would not leave the house at the same time for we were afraid to trust her there alone. I heard her husband threaten to leave her on account of reports about her character. I further say, that in the winter of 1825 and '6, it was currently reported and believed, that

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Mrs. Witham had illicit connexion with S— G—, at which time I heard Mr. Witham threaten to leave her. It was also currently reported about that time, that her father called said G— to account, and that G— paid five dollars to settle it, and left the place. I further say that in the summer of 1830, after Mrs. Witham came from Dover, and while at her father's it was currently reported and generally believed that Mrs. W. had a child which she threw into the pond or stream.

WILLIAM WEYMOUTH.

Subscribed and sworn to 3d Sept. 1841. Before me,
WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

I, Sally Weymouth, wife of Wm. Weymouth, do certify and say, that I distinctly recollect all the foregoing statements, and that they are correct.

SALLY WEYMOUTH.

Sworn to as above.

WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(C.)

I, Mehitable J. Jordan, of New Portland, in the County of Somerset, certify and say, that in the spring or summer of 1826, in conversation with Mrs. Hannah Witham, (now Mrs. Kinney,) she told me that S— G— had got into bed with her, and she (Hannah) told him (G—), he might get out as soon as he pleased. I observed to her, that was giving him great liberty,—how soon would you suppose he would get out? I think she said he got right out. After her return from Dover, I think in 1830, Nathan Hanson, Esq. came to our house, in company with one of the Selectmen, and got me to take Mrs. Witham, and said to me, I have come to see if I can get you to take Hannah, (meaning Mrs. Kinney) and keep her till I can hear from her husband. I told him I could not take her; I did not want her, for you know what folks say about her, and if I take her they will say I am as bad as she is. Hanson said to me, you must keep her 8 or 10 days, or I shall throw her upon the town, or turn her out of doors, for he could not live with her; for Hanson and his wife quarrelled so, his house was a hell upon earth. I did not consent to take her, but she came, and asked my husband's advice whether she had better go to Boston. He advised her to go, and in about three days she

left here for Boston, but said she should go to Dover and see Mr. H—, first. While Mrs. Witham was here, I saw three letters to her from Mr. H—, one of which she shewed me, in which he stated he had received her letter informing him of her situation, and requesting her to keep every thing secret as possible, and in a short time, (I think the next week) he would see her and have all things arranged to her satisfaction. In conversation with her sister V—, she (Mrs. V—) said to me, she believed that Hannah was in delicate circumstances, and got into her house in her absence and got medicine, and the next day she (Hannah) was sick and sent for the Doctor, her husband, who went, and shortly after returned and told her (Mrs. V—) that Hannah was in travail, and she (Mrs. V—) ought to go in and see her; she did go accordingly, and Hannah told her and Mrs. M— who went in with her, to go out; and Mrs. V— further said she had no doubt but Hannah had a child then. This conversation took place previous to Mrs. Witham's coming to our house. In conversation with Rev. E. G. Leach, in the summer of 1839, I think, Mr. Leach said to me that while Mrs. Kinney lived with Mr. Freeman, Mr. Kinney frequently visited Mrs. Freeman, and he had known him to give her ten or twenty dollars at a time. I asked him what Hannah had told her husband about the money;— he said she told him the rich members of the church gave it to her. He also said Mr. Freeman was jealous of her, and forbid Kinney coming to his house, and that Mr. F. was very unhappy. He also said, that at the time of Mr. Freeman's death, suspicions were had, that he was poisoned, and that a partial examination took place, but owing to the delicate situation of Mrs. Freeman and her ado, the examination was stopped; but no arsenic was found.

MEHITABLE J. JORDAN.

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, this thirty-first day of August, 1842.

WILLIAM TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(D.)

I, William Witham, Jr., of New Portland, in the County of Somerset, and State of Maine, do depose and say, that in the winter of 1825 and ~~26~~ I shut up my house in New Portland, to make a visit to ~~my~~ friends in Minot; I was absent

about six weeks, during which time there were taken from my house, one cheese, one bed blanket, and several other articles of less value. On my return, I was informed by scholars going to school, that they saw Mrs. Hannah Witham, now Mrs. Hannah Kinney, go into the house and also come out with a bundle, the contents of which, they could not tell. That, afterwards, myself and wife stated to her if she had taken said articles, and would acknowledge it, the affair could and should be settled and dropped. Soon after, her father, Nathan Hanson, Esq., advised her, if she did take the articles, to acknowledge it, and settle for them.— Afterwards, (the same year) she pretended to have met with a change, and tried to join the Freewill Baptist Church, on which Elder Samuel Hutchins came with her to my house to enquire about the lost goods; but she made no acknowledgment at that time,—however, she was not taken into the church. Previous to this she wrote a letter to my wife acknowledging she had received the lost articles, and would settle for them if we would keep the fact from her husband; which letter was shown to Elder Hutchins. In the summer of 1830, or the same year she left here for Boston, in a conversation with her father, at the west village in this town, Esq. Hanson said to me, "Witham, I want to tell you about Hannah"; I told him I knew enough already, and didn't want to hear any more about her; but he said, you know not how bad she is, for she is the worst liar I ever knew, and that is not all, for she has told my wife that I have been great with her, (Hannah) and it has caused a great deal of trouble and difficulty between me and my wife. He also said to me he had no doubt she had been great with H. [redacted] for he had taken from her by force, a letter from H. [redacted] and that wasn't the worst, for he had no doubt from what he had seen, that Hannah had a child at his house about that time.

WM. WITHAM, Jr.

SOMERSET ss.—August 31st, 1841. Subscribed and
sworn to. Before me,
WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(E.)

I, Abigail Witham, wife of the aforesaid Wm. Witham, Jr.
do depose and say, that the foregoing affidavit (excepting
the conversation with Esquire Hanson) is true. I further

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say, that after the G—— story came out, Mrs. Kinney came to me and wished me to persuade my husband to go and talk with Ward Witham, (her then husband,) and advise him not to go off and leave her and her children, as he had told her he should ; and she thought my husband could influence him.
ABIGAIL WITHAM,

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, this 31st day of August, 1841. Before me,
WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(F.)

I, Nathan Thomas, of New Portland, certify and say, that in conversation with Mrs. Hanson, (second wife of N. Hanson, Esq.) I think in December 1837, she told me she had no doubt that Mrs. Hannah Witham (now Mrs. Kinney of Boston) had a child at their house after she came from Dover, in 1830 I think it was, and that she (Mrs. Hanson) had no doubt she (Mrs. Witham) killed it—for at that time there was a terrible (or awful) scent in the chamber where Mrs. Witham was,—and that some days after, about dusk, Mrs. Witham went towards the stream with a bundle tied up. I further say that it was common report, that Mrs. Witham had illicit connexion with S—— G——, in the winter of 1825 and 6, and that her father called G—— to account for it, and made G—— pay five dollars to settle it—and al-~~most~~ 1830, it was common report, that Mrs. Witham had im-~~proper~~ conduct with a Caravan man while she was at her father's.
NATHAN THOMAS.

Subscribed and sworn to, this second day of Sept. 1841.
Before me, WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(G.)

I, Samuel Gould, Jr., of New Portland, certify and say, that I was in Boston from the 23d of August, 1830, to the 28th inclusive, and while there I met Mr. Ward Witham, formerly of this town, and in conversation about his wife and family, Mr. Witham stated to me that he had received a letter from a gentleman in Foxcroft, whose name he told me, but I cannot now recollect, informing him that it was

confidently believed in Foxcroft, that his wife was intimate with another man, there, (naming the man) but whose name I do not recollect; and that he (Mr. Witham) told me, her conduct (meaning his wife) had been such that he could not and should not live with her any longer, and said he was very sorry such was the case, (on account of his children,) and so appeared to be; and this was the first knowledge I had of his leaving her with the intention of not living with her again.

I further say, that afterwards in Boston, (in 1836, I think) I fell in company with Charles Stilphin, formerly of this town, and in conversation with him, he said to me he had frequently lodged with Mrs. Hannah Witham, and that she was the nicest bedfellow that he ever had found.

SAMUEL GOULD, JR.

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, this third day
of September, 1841.

Before me, WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(H.)

I, Matilda W. Niles, of Freeman, certify and say, that in the summer of 1830, I worked in the family of Nathan Hanson, Esq., of New Portland, and while I was there, Mrs. Hannah Witham was taken sick and sent for Dr. V—, who came and staid but a short time and went away. I further say, that Mrs. Hanson, Mrs. V— and Mrs. M—, went into Mrs. Witham's chamber, and soon returned and said Mrs. Witham ordered them out; and Mrs. Hanson told me, that Mrs. Witham was in travail. I further say, that a few days afterwards, when Mrs. Witham had partially recovered her health, I saw her between sunset and dark, go out of the house with something under her arm, and as she passed by the window her father said, she has gone to throw her child into the stream. I further say, that Mrs. Witham would not let any one make her bed, or wash any of her clothes, but after she got able, washed her own clothes, and had a very large washing. During Mrs. Witham's confinement, there was a very disagreeable smell in her chamber—so much so, that rags were frequently burnt to counteract the scent; and I often heard Esquire Hanson and his wife say the scent was caused by Mrs. Witham's child. I further say, that I

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frequently heard Esquire Hanson threaten to turn Mrs. Witham out of doors, or throw her upon the town.

MATILDA W. NILES.

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, Sept. 2, 1841.
Before me, WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(I.)

I, Hannah Jordan, of New Portland, do certify and say, that in conversation with Mrs. Hanson, second wife of Nathan Hanson, Esq., in the summer of 1830, she (Mrs. H.) told me that when Mrs. Hannah Witham (now Mrs. Kinney) came to their house from Dover, she (Mrs. Hanson) believed that Mrs. Witham was pregnant, and also that she believed Mrs. W. had an abortion at their house, but that she did not see it; and at that time there was a very bad scent in the house, and particularly in the stairway near the chamber.— I further say that Mrs. Hanson told me that Mrs. —— and Mrs. M— came there when Mrs. Witham was sick, and were ordered out of the chamber by Mrs. Witham; and some days after, Mrs. Witham, being partially recovered, took her cloak, and went towards the stream, and her father spoke of following her, having suspicions that she was going to conceal what caused the offensive scent in the house; and that directly after, the scent left the house.

I further say, that in the fall of 1840, after the news of the death of Mr. George T. Kinney had reached here, in conversation with N. Hanson, Esq., he said to me, that Mr. Kinney's relations ought to be ashamed to bring up any thing about her former conduct, but let other people do the talking; but, from all the circumstances that had come to his knowledge, he had no doubt Hannah had poisoned Mr. Kinney.

HANNAH JORDAN.

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, this first day
of Sept. 1841.
Before me, WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(J.)

I, John P. Hodsdon, of New Portland, certify and say, that in the year 1834 or '35, I fell in company with Charles Stilphin, in Boston, formerly of this town, ; that in conversation

with him, he told me he had frequently been with Mrs. Hannah Witham, * * * * * and to get clear of her he left Boston for New York, from whence he had just then returned. He also told me that Rev. E. W. Freeman came to Boston to enquire about her character, but he could not find out any thing there, and her friends knew where to send him for information. He further said to me, he frequently passed the shop where she was at work, and would give her the wink and she would take her bonnet and come out and walk with him, and then they would lodge together, as he intimated to me.

J. P. HODSDON.

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, Sept. 3, 1841.
Before me, WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

(K.)

I, Almira Luce, of New Portland, testify and say, that in December, 1837, I was present at a conversation between my mother and Nathan Thomas, at our house, and that I heard mother tell Mr. Thomas that, in the summer of 1830, after Mrs. Hannah Witham came to Esquire Hanson's from Dover, she (Mrs. Witham) had an abortion, which she thought was the cause of a very disagreeable scent in the house, until Mrs. W. went out the first of the evening with something—and Esquire Hanson said she had gone to throw it into the stream.

ALMIRA LUCE.

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, 1842.
Before me, WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

[The mother of the deponent was dead at the time of the making this affidavit.]

I, _____, of New Portland, certify and say, that in conversation with N. Hanson, Esq. soon after the arrest of Mrs. Hannah Kinney, he said, he was in hopes he never should have heard any thing more about Hannah, as she had caused him so much trouble, that you know said he;—and that he believed or feared she was the cause of Kinney's death, but he did not think she would be hung, as she was a female, and public opinion was against hanging. I further say, that Rev. E. G. Leach told me, he was requested by Esquire Hanson to talk with Mrs. Batchelder, the intended

third wife of Hanson, and tell her the whole story about Mrs. K., which he said he did in full, that she would not be deceived if she married Esquire H.

I further say, that it has been commonly reported and generally believed here, that Mrs. Kinney's character for truth, moral honesty and chastity is very bad, and has been ever since her marriage with Mr. Witham.

SOMERSET ss.—Subscribed and sworn to, Sept. 3, 1841.
Before me, WM. TITCOMB, Justice of Peace.

DOVER, Aug. 27, 1841.

I certify that I am a native of New Portland, and resided in that town till within eight years since, in the neighborhood of Nathan Hanson, Esq. It was currently reported and generally believed, about the year 1826, that Mrs. Hannah Witham had illicit connexion with a young Mr. S—G—. It was also reported and generally believed, that Mrs. Witham was pregnant in the summer of 1830, and that she caused an abortion by designedly taking some drugs for that purpose. It was also reported and believed that she had illicit connection with a young man, an attendant of a caravan, which passed through New Portland, in 1830. It was likewise reported and believed that N. Nanson, Esq. settled with S— —, and received of him five dollars.

HOSEA RICKER.

(L.)

Since commencing this work, I fell in with a person I was formerly acquainted with, who knew Mrs. Kinney long before I did, and he has made an affidavit which will give the reader some light concerning the history of her youth, which I cannot give from my own knowledge. It is but too true that

"Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined,"
and in the life of this woman we see this fully illustrated. I will give the substance of the affidavit.

The deponent worked with Nathan Hanson of New Portland, about the year 1819 or 20; Hannah Hanson was then 15 or 16 years of age, and he was intimately acquainted with her for about two months. He knew that she was then des-

titude of all moral principle—that she would steal, lie, and be guilty of unmentionable improprieties with men. That she told him the first man that ‘courted’ her was named C——, and that he was the first man she knew improperly. That C—— suspected another person of having been with her, and expressed much regret that she was not chaste, for then he should take a good deal of comfort with her. That she further told him, on his inquiry if she were not sorry on account of her inconstancy to C——, that she did not know that she had any more affection for one man than for another; that she sometimes asked herself if she had reason to regret her misconduct, and concluded that on the whole, it was not of much consequence how she conducted. He further says that her character, at that time, was bad for chastity and honesty; that she was “hypocritical, deceitful and cunning”—that her father had a great deal of trouble with her, but could not restrain her. That, by her manners and personal appearance, she was capable of deceiving almost any man. That she was one of that class of women who, by their beauty, arts, cunning and deception, have the power to ensnare the other sex, and seduce them from the path of duty and get them into trouble; that she cared nothing for her reputation, and no further for the feelings or reputation of others than would answer her purposes; and that, after she left Dover, and while she was in New Portland, she informed a person, who told him, that her conduct, while in Dover, had been no better than it was in New Portland, previous to her going to Dover.

BANGOR, Dec. 1841.

This certifies that I have compared the original manuscript of the letter on pages 50, 51 and 52 of this book, with the hand writing of Mrs. Kinney, and the hand writing appears the same.

JOHN S. SAYWARD.

(T.)

I, the undersigned, certify that within six months past I have seen the certificates referred to in page 72 of this book, and compared them with the hand writing of Ward Witham; and that, although there is a similarity in the hand writing, to a certain extent, they may be forgeries.

Bangor, Feb. 1842.

(W.)

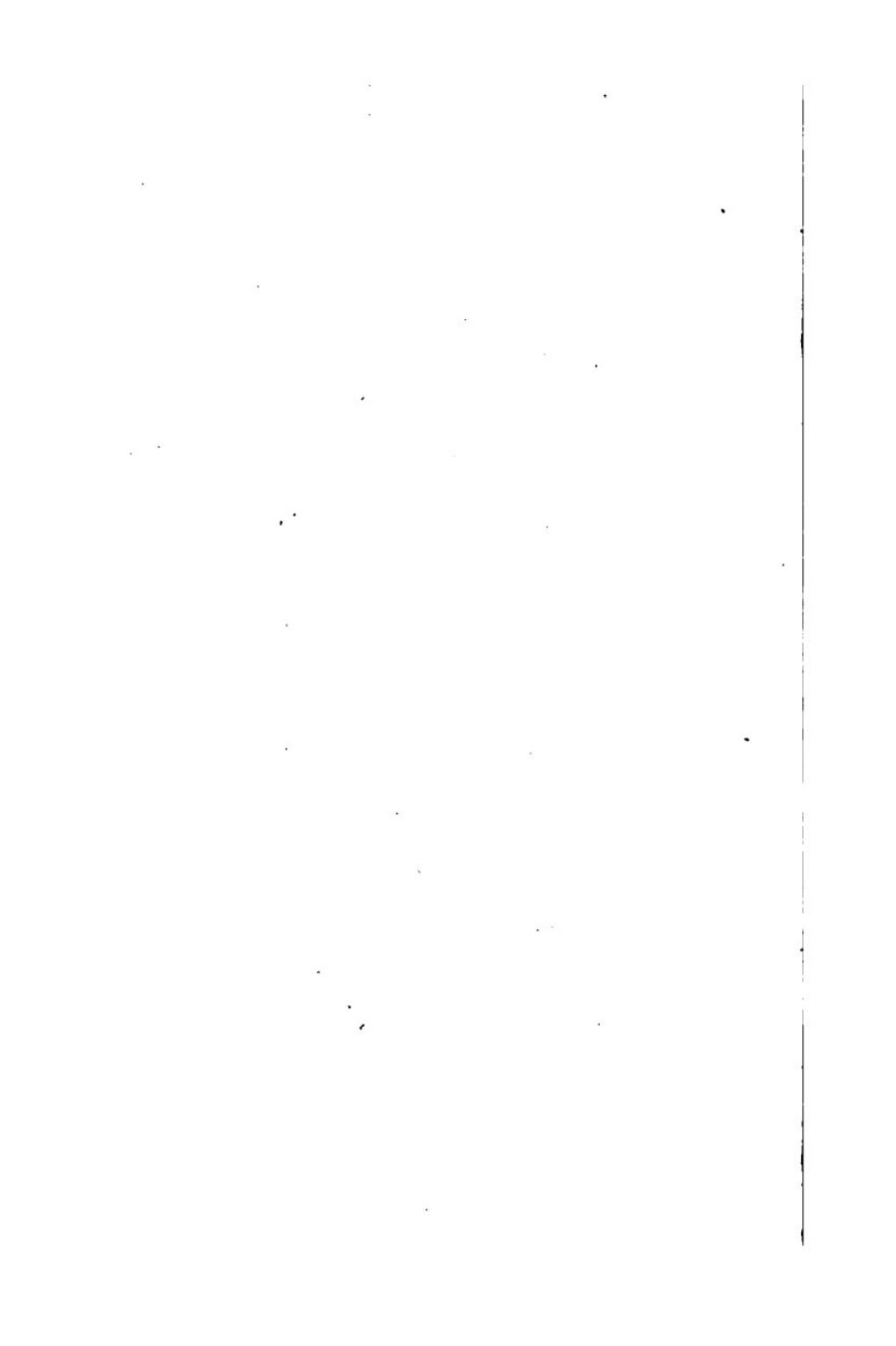
I the undersigned, City Clerk of Bangor, certify, in addition to the above, that I am of opinion that any person disposed to make use of counterfeit hand writing would not attempt to use that which did not as nearly resemble the original, as the writing of said certificates does that of Captain Witham.

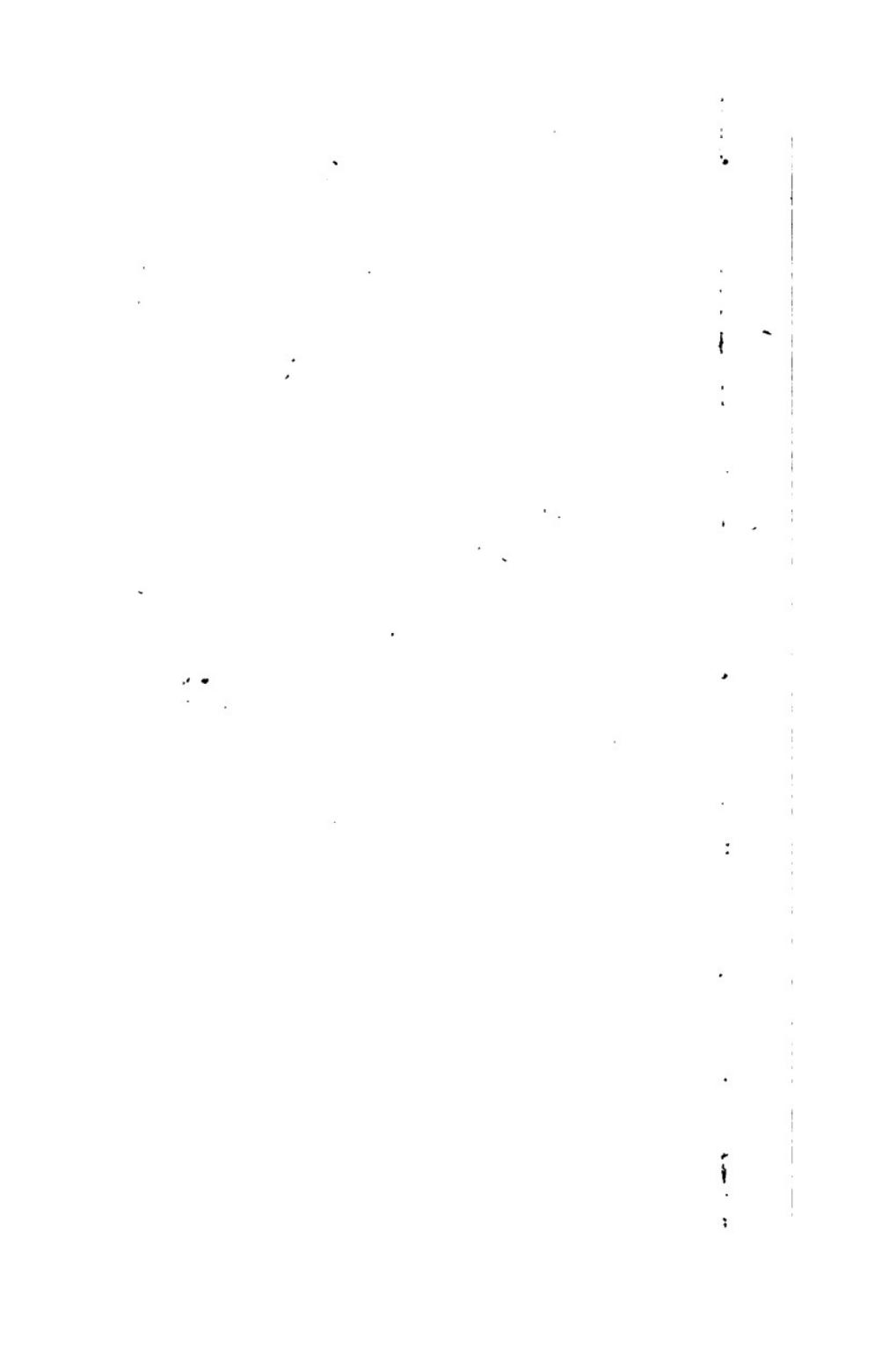
JOHN S. SAYWARD.

Bangor, Feb. 1842.

ERRATA.—In page 47, eleventh line from the bottom, for 1839 read 1829.

In page 5 of the Appendix, 7th line from the bottom, for 1842 read 1841.

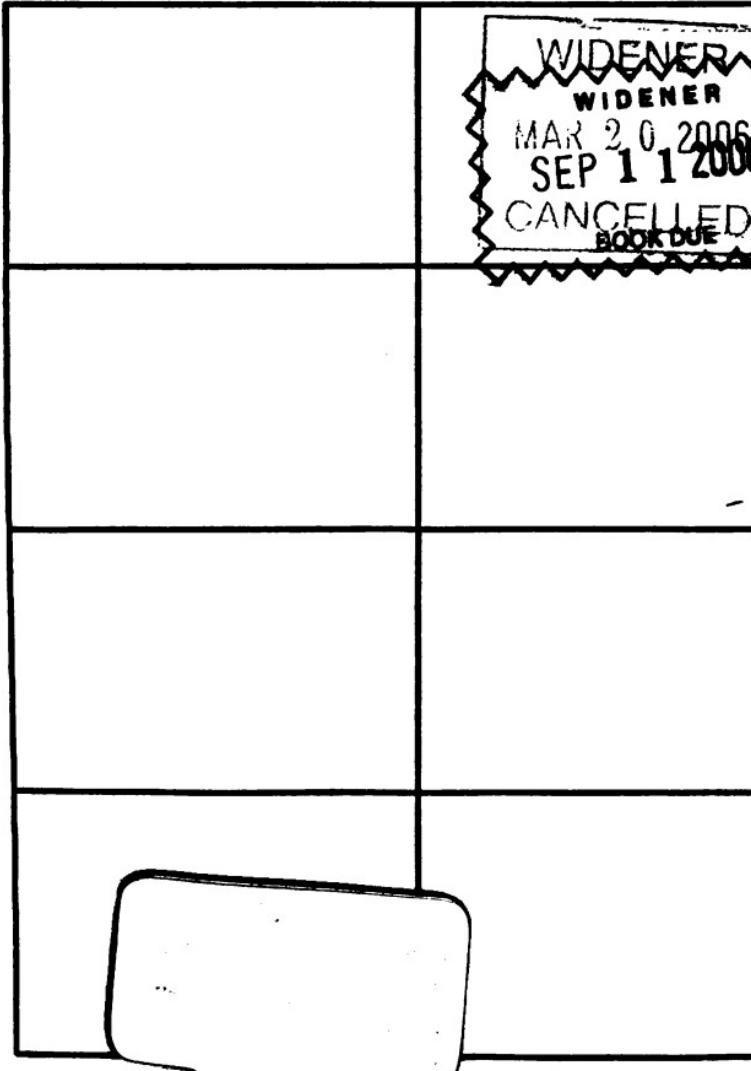
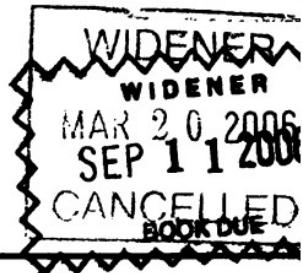




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